TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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SAVE THE DATES

SEPTEMBER 26-28
FRIDAY-SUNDAY
TNPS ANNUAL MEETING
Pickwick Landing State Park, Hardin Co.
Look for more details in the June Newsletter, the website, on Facebook and via email.

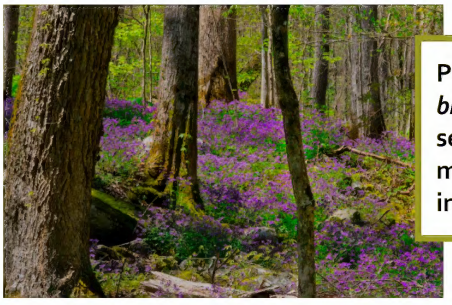
Chasing Wildflowers: Spring Ephemerals

by Donna Bollenbach

It is time to venture out to see the Spring ephemerals. Don't hesitate, or you may miss them. A spring ephemeral is a wildflower that blooms briefly in the early spring, usually before the trees leaf out. While some spring ephemerals may be seen in March, peak bloom time is usually mid to late April in the valleys and late April to mid-May in the higher elevations.

Wildflower Pilgrimages, Festivals, and Hikes are planned around the beautiful show these short-lived flowers bring to our landscapes. TNPS has several field trips to see the spring wildflowers in March, April, and May. Details start on page 6 in this newsletter.

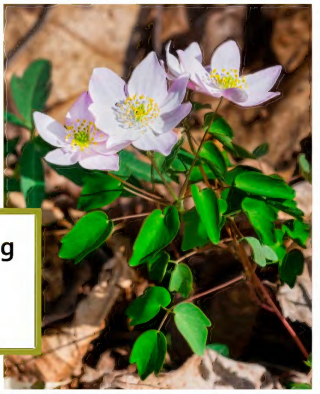
Here are some common spring ephemerals to inspire you to join the chase for wildflowers this spring:



Purple Phacelia, *Phacelia bipinnatifidia*, may be seen blanketing the mountains of Tennessee in the spring.

You will need to look under the leaves to see the spring blossoms of the Mayapple, *Podophyllum peltatum.*

Foamflower, *Tiarella cordifolia*, is found in moist woods and well-drained bottomlands.



Rue Anemone, *Thalictrum thalictroides*, is a spring ephemeral found in deciduous woodlands in Tennessee and throughout the southeast.

(Continued on page 15)

TNPS Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Tennessee Native Plant Society and is published four times a year, generally March, June, September, and December.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) was founded in 1978. Its purposes are to assist in the exchange of information and encourage fellowship among Tennessee's botanists, both amateur and professional; to promote public education about Tennessee flora and wild plants in general; to provide, through publication of a newsletter or journal, a formal means of documenting information onTennessee flora and of informing the public about wild plants; and to promote the protection and enhancement of Tennessee's wild plant communities.

Membership Dues:
Individual/Family: $20
Student: Complimentary
Institution: $50
Life:$250
Join online or renew via the member portal, or mail a check to:
Tennessee Native Plant Society
PO Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

Officers
Mitchell Kent, President
Tim Kaltenbach, Vice-President
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Kim Sadler, Treasurer
Lesly & Jesse Gunn, Assistant Treasurers

Directors
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Bart Jones
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Mary Priestley
Ken Rea
Allen Trently

Newsletter Editor
Donna Bollenbach

The President's Perspective

I am truly honored and grateful to have been elected as the President of the Tennessee Native Plant Society. Thank you for your trust and support. It is a privilege to serve such a dedicated community committed to conservation of the our state's native plants and their habitats.

I want to acknowledge the hard work and leadership of our past president, Karen Hill, for whom I have the deepest respect. Over the past year, I have had the opportunity to work closely with Karen on Neon One implementation and other projects. Her dedication throughout her term has strengthened our society and advanced our mission, providing a solid foundation on which we can continue to grow. I look forward to building upon her efforts and working alongside each of you to expand our reach and impact.

In addition to continuing our current programs, there are several additional areas I plan to focus on this year:

1. Strengthening Engagement with Colleges and Universities
One of my top priorities is increasing TNPS's engagement with colleges and universities, including their faculty and students. We currently have over 125 student members, many of whom are studying botany, ecology, and biological sciences. By finding ways for them to contribute through their academic backgrounds, we can enhance their involvement while inspiring future TNPS leaders. Additionally, fostering stronger connections with faculty will help us stay informed on current trends in native plant conservation and expand our outreach to students as potential long-term members.

2. Expanding Fundraising Efforts
TNPS is fortunate to receive donations from both members and nonmembers, for which we are truly grateful. However, most organizations like TNPS engage in active, year-round fundraising, which expands their reach and enables them to fund more projects. With the capabilities of the Neon One platform, we already have the tools to launch fundraising campaigns, track progress, and report on results. Strengthening our fundraising efforts will allow us to keep membership dues low, offset rising costs, and support additional grants and conservation initiatives.

3. Recognizing Our Members' Contributions
I believe it's important to recognize members who have made valuable contributions to TNPS and its mission. To do this, we are launching the TNPS Member Spotlight series, which will feature outstanding members and their contributions in our newsletter and on our Facebook page. Our first TNPS Member Spotlight (page 4 of this newsletter) features Kim Sadler. I encourage you to help us identify members whom you believe should be recognized—please send me your recommendations.

4. Enhancing Member Retention
Retaining members is crucial to our society's long-term success. While some non-renewals are due to personal reasons

(Continued on page 3)

A Tribute to Karen Hill

for her dedicated service to TNPS

By Bart Jones

I can't exactly remember the first time I met Karen, I believe it was on a field trip where she had accompanied Alice Jensen. But I definitely remember meeting Karen at her first board meeting. Karen was asked to bring her talents in website development to upgrade the society's site into the exceptionally beautiful and informative destination we enjoy today.

She became a trusted voice and creative thinker to the board meetings in her ex-officio role. We had just had an opening come up with the Treasurer's position, and as a past-president that had to go through the exact scenario just a few years before, I wanted to support our President at the time, Susan Sweetser, to fill the position as quickly as possible. For a President, there is no other position that helps the society run as smoothly as a really good Treasurer. Karen came on board with an enthusiasm that you don't necessarily see when someone takes on a position like that, and within a few months the financial side of the society was in great shape.

In natural progression, Karen became President of TNPS, and being Karen, she had several ideas in mind she thought would improve the society. For those members who've only recently joined you can't appreciate the immense impact Karen has had, but us old-timers know we are the modern, technologically forward group we are today through her efforts. Karen's magical power is her ability to lead with a firm, but gentle hand, always nudging people to take on tasks or positions and then allowing them to perform them on their own terms. This gives us a society that is strong and dynamic without the micromanaging that can often unravel things.

Just a few of the highlights of Karen's presidency include the establishment of the monthly Zoom Seminars, which directly led to a doubling of our membership, the Grants 4 Native Plants initiative, and her fight to include recognition and mandates for native plants in township, county, and HOA requirements. But probably most consequential, bringing us into the NeonOne world and all the benefits they can bring with managing the society's membership. For this I am personally very appreciative.

So I can truly say, thank you Karen for your vision, leadership, and service to TNPS.

(Continued from page 2)

such as moving out of state, a better understanding of the reasons behind membership lapses can provide valuable feedback for improvement. With Neon CRM, we have tools to track and address retention trends. I welcome your ideas on how we can enhance member engagement and broaden participation in TNPS activities. Please feel free to share your thoughts with me and the board members.

TNPS thrives because of its members, your participation, enthusiasm, and expertise make us a driving force for conservation. I encourage you to continue sharing your knowledge, volunteering, and contributing to our collective mission. Whether through field trips, research, or outreach initiatives, your involvement is invaluable.

I am excited about the journey ahead and look forward to collaborating with each of you. Together, let us continue making a meaningful difference.

With gratitude,

Mitchell
President, Tennessee Native Plant Society

TNPS Members Make a Difference

"Conserving and celebrating native plant communities and their habitats through education." That's the TNPS mission.

Since 1978, our members have been finding friends in this organization, spending time together, learning, discussing, and teaching. We even venture into wild places to experience the the thrill of native wildflowers we cherish so much. It turns out that being a part of a group that's making a difference is really satisfying!

TNPS is seeing success and growth. We're helping establish native gardens in schools and public places, encouraging students from grade school to university, educating civic leaders about natives, and more. Because of TNPS, public awareness of native plants has significantly expanded throughout the Southeast region since 1977.

Many people are helping TNPS by making gifts to the organization in addition to their membership dues. TNPS is all volunteer, so donations allow it to do even more to fulfill its mission. If you would like to join other members in making a tax-deductible contribution, please go to our website http://www.TNPS.org and click the "Make a Donation" box or mail a check to:

TNPS
P.O. Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

Thank you for your membership and dedication! For questions, please send an email to info@tnps.org

Dr. Robert Kral: Paying tribute to a legend in the world of Botany

Dr. Robert Kral, 1926 –2025

TNPS is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Dr. Robert Kral, an esteemed botanist and a retired botany professor at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. He was the curator of the Herbarium at Vanderbilt University until it was moved to the Botanical Research Institute in Texas in 1997. In 2012, he was selected for the TNPS Hall of Fame Award. (https://tnps.org/hall-of-fame/)

Dr Kral retired in 1998.

Dr. Kral was a major contributor to botany in the southeast. He was a noted expert in Xyridaceae (yellow-eyed grasses) and Cyperaceae (sedge) families. His contributions to "The Flora of North America" and many other books on plant taxonomy and scientific papers were invaluable. He was also an expert in rare plants and, along with Dr. Eugene Wofford, was the first to describe the rare and endangered Cumberland Sandwort, *Geocarpon cumberlandense*. Dr. Kral also mentored many botanists throughout his career, some of which credit him for their career choice. He will be greatly missed by many.

Read more about Dt. Robert Kral's life here: https://robertkral.com/

TNPS MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Kim Sadler

by Mitchell Kent

In this edition of the TNPS Member Spotlight, we feature **Kim Cleary Sadler**. Kim has been a member of TNPS for over 25 years. She is a strong supporter of the TNPS mission *"To conserve and celebrate native plants and their habitats through education."* She currently serves as the Treasurer for TNPS and a member of the TNPS Board of Directors.

What you may not know about Kim is that she holds a Doctor of Education (EdD) degree and is a professor in the Department of Biology at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). In this position, Kim teaches numerous courses, including Introduction to Biology (BIO L1030/1110/1120), Biology for Elementary Teachers (BIOL 3000), Undergraduate Research in Biology (BIOL 4280), and Biome Analysis – Cedar Glades (BIOL 4331). She is also a doctoral faculty in the Mathematics and Science Education Program.

Kim is director of the MTSU Center for Environmental Education and co-director of the Center for Cedar Glade Studies, established in 2005. Additionally, she is involved in various activities, including grant writing assistance and consulting services.

As a passionate advocate of cedar glades, Kim works tirelessly to promote awareness of these endangered ecosystems and their need for protection. She discusses this topic in a brief video published by MTSU, in which Kim provides a walkthrough of a cedar glade and highlights its key features.

Kim is actively engaged in TNPS activities. In 2023, she was one of the organizers of the TNPS Annual Conference at the Cedars of Lebanon State Park, held in conjunction with the annual Elsie Quarterman Cedar Glade Wildflower Festival. She has also co-authored a booklet entitled *Limestone Cedar Glades: An Introduction to Some Common and Rare Species*, providing valuable information about plants in these unique habitats. Proceeds from the booklet's sales are donated to TNPS. Kim is a highly valued member of the Neon One Implementation Team. She has played a crucial role in upgrading QuickBooks from the desktop to the online version, enabling integration of TNPS accounting records with the Neon One CRM module – a complex and demanding task.

Please join us in congratulating Kim Sadler on her contributions to the mission of TNPS and thanking her for her years of service and support to the society.

TECH TIPS: Navigating NEON

Your guide to making the most of the TNPS website and Neon Portal

Each issue we will give you tips on using the TNPS website and the NEON portal to benefit most from your membership. This month, we will review communications preferences:

Make sure you don't miss any important notifications from TNPS! To receive all the email communications you want from TNPS, please check your communication preferences in the "Member Login Portal."

Here's how to do it:

1. Log in to the portal. (www.TNPS.org)

2. Navigate to the sidebar menu on the left and select "Communications Update."

3. On the "Communication Preferences Form," review the checkboxes at the bottom and choose the categories of emails you would like to receive, such as "Announcements," "Annual Conference," "Field Trips," and more.

After you make your selections, you will receive emails for the categories you have chosen. You can update your preferences at any time.

FIELD TRIP REPORT: UTC HERBARIUM AT UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE IN CHATTANOOGA

by Juanita Wade and Donna Bollenbach

Dr. Joey Shaw

On January 16th and January 27th, participants from TNPS and the community were able to tour a hidden treasure at the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga (UTC): The UTC Herbarium, a biological collection of identified, pressed, mounted, and preserved plant specimens curated by Dr. Joey Shaw, Associated Professor of Biology at UTC.

The UTC Herbarium has the distinction of being the oldest in Tennessee, dating back to 1886, and the third largest in the state behind the University of Tennessee at Knoxville and Austin Peay State University. Over 45000 plant specimens are stored in the UTC Herbarium, with the largest number representing plants from southeast Tennessee, northwest Georgia, and Northeast Alabama, with others collected worldwide. Participants were shown one pressed plant that was collected in 1875.

A classroom full of attentive participants.

The collection is housed in a climate-controlled room in metal cabinets where they are categorized by plant family. But these specimens are not just locked away for posterity. Dr. Shaw, with the help of his students, is leading the state in digitizing Tennessee's herbarium collections (over 900,000 specimens) so the data will be available to researchers, educators, conservationists, policymakers, and hobbyists. The Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections, SERNEC, currently houses digitized images, where citizen scientists are invited to help transcribe herbarium records to voucher the specimens so they can be made public. To learn how you can help in this critical step, visit the *SERNEC volunteer page*.

Attendees of the Herbarium tour were also given some hands-on work as well. Quinn Towery, a graduate student at UTC, walked them through the process of mounting a pressed plant specimen on archival paper with archival glue. A small part of the herbarium's task of preserving the past for the future.

A participant mounting a plant specimen.

A mounted passionflower specimen.

Participants with Dr. Shaw in the UTC Herbarium

Quinn, a graduate student, in the processing room

2025 TNPS Field Trip & Events Schedule

Fieldtrip details are subject to change. Please visit https://tnps.org/field-trips/ for updates and a state map with fieldtrip locations.

JANUARY 16 (THURSDAY) AND JANUARY 27: UTC HERBARIUM AT UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE IN CHATTANOOGA, HAMILTON COUNTY

Description: Join us for a guided tour of the UTC Herbarium on the University of Tennessee (UTC) campus in Chattanooga hosted by curator Joey Shaw, PhD. In addition to his work in herbarium curation, Dr. Shaw is UC Foundation Professor at UTC and conducts research in floristics of the Southeast, plant species of conservation concern, and others. The UTC Herbarium is the oldest in Tennessee, established in 1886, and the third largest in the state. It contains approximately 45,000 specimens of macroalgae, seedless and seed-bearing plant specimens primarily from southeastern Tennessee, northwest Georgia, and northeast Alabama. It is associated with the Southeastern Regional Network of Expertise and Collections, or SERNEC, through which it provides online access to digitized specimens for research by other universities and the public.

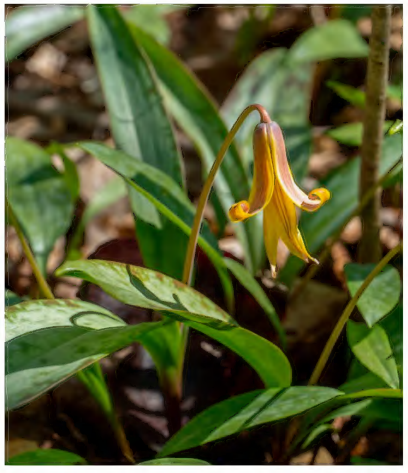
Meeting Place/Time: The UTC Herbarium is located at 215 Holt Hall inside the UTC Department of Biology, Geology, and Environmental Science on the UTC at 702 Mocs Alumni Drive. We will meet in front of the UTC Holt Hall at 5:50 PM Eastern. Visitor parking is available nearby off Vine St in Lot 10. According to the University Parking Services after hours, there is no charge for visitor parking after 5 pm and no requirement for a visitor pass.

Leaders: Mitchell Kent (mkent423@gmail.com) and Dr. Joey Shaw. Please email Mitchell to let us know if you plan to attend. Limit of 24 participants.

While this field trip is over, you can read the field trip report on page 6.

MARCH 22 (SATURDAY) WILDFLOWER SPOT ON THE N. WALKER ACCESS TO THE NORTH RIDGE TRAIL, ANDERSON CO.

Description: This is a joint outing for TNPS and TCWP. This is an amazing spot for early spring ephemerals. It's covered in trout lilies (*Erythronium americanum*) with pockets of twin leaf (*Jeffersonia diphylla*), foamflowers (*Tiarella cordifolia*), wood poppies (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), and spring beauties (*Claytonia virginica*). If we hit the timing right, the Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) might be blooming.



Trout Lily, *Erythronium americanum*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Meeting Places/Time: There is minimal parking at the trailhead, but there is some street parking along N. Walker Rd and West Outer Dr. There is also ample parking at the nearby Children's Museum of Oak Ridge. 10:00 AM Eastern.

Difficulty: The trail is only about 0.7 miles one way, but it is steep in spots. It also can be muddy, and there is a stream crossing.

Facilities: The Children's Museum has facilities.

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray

Leaders: Margaret Cumberland and Larry Pounds. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact in case of cancellation. Phone/email: 919-339-0072, meshearin@gmail.com

MARCH 25 (TUESDAY, rain date MARCH 27) SHORT SPRINGS NATURAL AREA, MACHINE FALLS, ADAMS FALLS AND BUSBY FALLS, COFFEE CO.

Description: This is a 3-mile hike that is rated moderate. There is a stream crossing, so please wear waterproof or water-resistant footwear. Bring your hiking poles because there is a steep descent down to the wildflower section and a steep ascent back up the same way. Trout lily (*Erythronium americanum)*, Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) (on the right side on the steep decent), dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*), Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*), large-flowered trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), southern red trillium (*Trillium sulcatum*) (on the left side of the steep descent.) There are two state-listed endangered species, Nestronia (*Nestronia umbellula*) and broad-leaved bunchflower (*Melanthium hybridum*).

Meeting Place/Time: Costco in Murfreesboro, 1525 Beasie Rd. Meet near the Costco gas station at 10:00 AM Central. There is very limited parking, so we will need to carpool and leave most of the cars in the Costco parking lot. Please be willing to share with riders in your car. We will take the cars that hold the most people. Hike location: 200 Short Springs Rd., Tullahoma. Arrive at 10:50 AM Central. Please carpool.

Facilities: Unknown. Be sure to use the facilities at Costco; bring your Costco card if you have one.

Virginia Bluebells, *Mertensia virginica*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Lunch: There's a nice and simple menu at the meat and three close to Old Stone Fort on the right side, just before the Old Stone Fort entrance. The restaurant is Stone Fort Restaurant. It's very casual, and the prices are low.

Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip. To register and reserve your spot visit https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents, select the fieldtrip and "Get Tickets." Enter the number of tickets and continue. Fill in required information and submit the order. **There is a limit of 12 participants**.

Leader: Laurie Bruno, If you need to contact the leader, call 615-415-8595 and leave a detailed message. Note that I will likely not have cell service within 15 miles of the park on the day of the hike.

APRIL 4-6 (FRIDAY-SUNDAY) – TRAILS AND TRILLIUMS, SEWANEE, FRANKLIN CO.

https://www.trailsandtrilliums.org/

APRIL 12 (SATURDAY) FROZEN HEAD WILDFLOWER WALK, MORGAN CO.

Description: This is a joint outing for TNPS and TCWP. We will have an excellent opportunity to see spring wildflowers. We will hike from Panther Branch Trailhead. The first 0.55 miles are ideal for those with limited hiking capabilities. The trail is wide and flat. For those continuing the next 1 mile along Panther Branch, it is steeper and rougher but still only moderate. Panther Branch is a place to see dwarf ginseng (*Panax trifolius*). The early start time is in the hope of finding more parking at the trailhead.

Meeting Place/Time: Frozen Head State Park office parking area at 8:30 AM Eastern Time.

Difficulty: Moderate with a distance of up to 3 miles, depending on when you turn back. Easy for the first half mile.

Facilities: At the meeting place.

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray.

Leader: Larry Pounds. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact in case of cancelation. Phone/email: 865-705-8516, PoundsL471@aol.com

APRIL 13 (SUNDAY) – DEAN'S WOODS WILDFLOWER HIKE, KNOX CO.

Description: Dean's Woods is a 25-acre jewel of biodiversity in South Knoxville owned by the University of Tennessee. Although surrounded by an older residential neighborhood, its display of vernal flora in March, April, and May is unmatched west of the Smokies! The Woods are on steep hillsides above Spring Creek, about a mile south of the UT Medical Center. Join us for a leisurely stroll down the hill from the trailhead at 3001 Germantown Lane. We will descend about 250 feet over the course of about half a mile along a tributary of Spring Creek, then turn west across the tributary (easy step-over) to walk just above Spring Creek and below a hillside adorned with bloodroot, Virginia bluebells, trillium (4 or 5 species), larkspur, Dutchman's breeches, squirrel corn, and other vernal flora. A white morph of Virginia bluebells is particularly interesting! The watershed also has a mature, hardwood forest with some very large trees. During the last three years, several work parties led by the Sierra Club and UT students have removed substantial amounts of invasive, exotic plants from the watershed, but there is much left to do. We will also explore a side trail about halfway up the hill with a dense coverage of Dutchman's breeches.

Meeting Place/Time: 3001 Germantown Lane, Knoxville, at **2 PM Eastern. The hike ends at 5 PM.**

Difficulty: This is a moderate hike of about three miles with a descent and ascent of around 250 feet.

Lunch: At your discretion. This is a mid-afternoon hike. Bring plenty of water or an energy drink.

Facilities: None (but lots of bushes!)

Registration: Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip. To register and reserve your spot visit https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents, select the fieldtrip and "Get Tickets." Enter the number of tickets and continue. Fill in required information and submit the order. **There is a limit of 20 participants**.

Leader: Mac Post, Phone./email: 865-806-0980, mpost3116@gmail.com. (Mac is a retired PhD Ecologist and long-time hike leader for the Sierra Club)

APRIL 23-26 (WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY) WILDFLOWER PILGRIMAGE, SMOKY MOUNTAINS **Info:** https://www.wildflowerpilgrimage.org/

APRIL 27 (SUNDAY) - SLOWLY WE WALK, STEP BY STEP – A GENTLE NATURE FORAY ALONG CITICO CREEK, MONROE CO.

Description: Many people would enjoy going on more nature hikes but hesitate because they are not interested in fast-paced, sometimes strenuous walks. This will be the opposite and is geared towards those of us who like to move slowly and purposely through nature, noticing every plant. Our leader, John Manion, will lead this walk (and drive) along various locations bordering Citico Creek. All our walking will be on established paths, none of which are steep or rough. John will bring attention to the rich flora and history of this area…both identifying and telling fascinating stories of many plant species. At the end of our foray, those interested will be offered a tour of Overhill Gardens - where nearly 1,000 species of native plants are grown.

Meeting Place/Time: Overhill Gardens, 1404 Citico Road, Vonore, **9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Eastern**. We will gather at Overhill Gardens and carpool to nearby Citico Creek, where we will park at various pull-offs to explore each location.

Difficulty: Easy

Lunch: Bring food/snacks/drinks.

Facilities: Few and far between.

Leader: John Manion, manionsnature@gmail.com

ELSIE QUARTERMAN CEDAR GLADE WILDFLOWER FESTIVAL at Cedars of Lebanon SP (May 2-3) and Long Hunter SP (May 4)

For more information, visit: https://glade-center.mtsu.edu/

To register: https://reserve.tnstateparks.com/register/47th-elsie-quarterman-cedar-glade-wildflower-festival5325

MAY 3 (SATURDAY) LAUREL RUN PARK, HAWKINS CO.

Description: Laurel Run Park is considered one of the best places for Spring ephemeral wildflowers. The combination of a north-facing slope, a limestone substrate, and a rugged forested stream valley make it an ideal place for ephemerals. Laurel Run Park was donated to Hawkins County after the completion of the film The River, which starred Mel Gibson and Sissy Spacek. We will pass two small waterfalls, Laurel Run Falls and Kiner Falls. Laurel Run is known more for its proliferation of wildflowers than for having rare wildflowers. Hillsides covered in trilliums, Guyandotte beauty (*Synarda hispidula*), Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*), and dwarf larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*) are stunning. We will also see largeleaf waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum macrophyllum*), mountain wood sorrel (*Oxalis mon*tana), Celandine poppy (*Stylophorum diphyllum*), and sweet white trillium (*Trillium simile*).

Celandine Poppy, *Stylophorum diphyllum*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Meeting Place/Time: We will meet at the parking lot near the restroom at 10:00 AM Eastern.

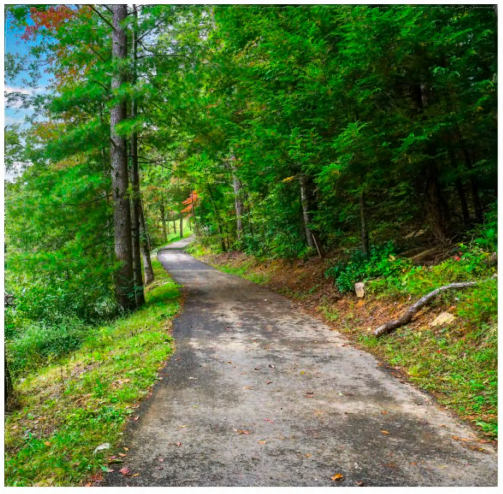
Difficulty: Moderate. Hiking poles are helpful.

Facilities: Yes.

Lunch: Bring to eat.

Leader: Ken Rea, kenrea2@gmail.com, 423-737-3882

MAY 3 (SATURDAY) OAK RIDGE PAVED GREENWAY, ANDERSON CO.



A paved nature trail
Photo by Donna Bollenbach

Description: This is sponsored by TNPS and TCWP. We will see late-spring wildflowers and do some tree and shrub identification along the paved greenway.

Meeting Place/Time: At the end of Old Edgemoor Rd. in Haw Ridge Park at 9:00 AM Eastern (36.01034, -84.16753).

Difficulty: This should work for those with limited walking ability. Wheelchairs are a possibility. We will walk or roll on a flattish paved trail. The total out and back distance is about 1.5 miles. As usual, attendees can turn back when they want.

Facilities: None

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray

Leader: Larry Pounds. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact if there are changes. Phone/email: 865-705-8516, PoundsL471@aol.com

MAY 10 (SATURDAY) KENTUCKY LADY SLIPPER, DECATUR CO.

Description: This trip will focus on the Kentucky lady slipper (*Cypripedium kentuckiense*), a state-endangered species only found in 3 counties in Tennessee. We will also explore a couple of roadside stops before the lady slipper site. After lunch, there will be an optional trip to a seep area in Natchez Trace State Park.

Meeting Place/Time: Love's at I-40 exit 126, left side parking area. 10:00 AM Central

Difficulty: Moderate. There are some steep sections and wet areas (including a possible creek crossing).

Facilities: At Love's.

Lunch: Arby's at Love's.

Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip. To register and reserve your spot visit https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents, select the fieldtrip and "Get Tickets." Enter the number of tickets and continue. Fill in required information and submit the order. **There is a limit of 20 participants**.

Leader: Bart Jones, bjones7777@hotmail.com (901-485-2745)

MAY 17 (SATURDAY) NORRIS GRIST MILL TO OBSERVATION POINT, ANDERSON CO.

Description: This is a joint outing for TNPS and TCWP. This loop starts in a valley with spring wildflowers that are usually a little later. We will also go by some populations of pink lady slippers (*Cypripedium acaule*), climbing to a nice view of Norris Dam.

Pink Lady Slippers, *Cypripedium acaule* photo by . D.Bollenbach

Meeting Places/Time:

1. Parking lot at the Norris Grist Mill (Lower Clear Creek Rd, Norris, TN 37828) at 10:00 AM Eastern.

2. Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9:15 AM Eastern.

Difficulty: The trail is a moderate 2.5-mile loop.

Facilities: The Lenoir Museum nearby has facilities.

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray

Leader: Margaret Cumberland. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact in case of cancellation. Phone/email: 919-339-0072, meshearin@gmail.com

MAY 17 (SATURDAY) WESTERN HIGHLAND RIM STREAM AND SAVANNA WALK AT LAUREL HILL WMA, LAWRENCE CO.

Description: We will visit two areas within Laurel Hill WMA, a hidden gem of botany in TN. First, we will do a stream walk in the Little Buffalo River and explore the rich diversity on the streambanks and seeps. Be prepared to walk in the stream! After visiting the stream, we will head to a Post Oak savanna in another area of the WMA.

Meeting Place/Time: Marathon Gas Station (35°21'13"N, 87°27'04"W) at the intersection of TN-240 and Red Hill-Center Rd at 10:00 AM Central.

Difficulty: The only difficult part will be the stream walk due to the risk of slipping. Please be prepared to walk in the stream

Facilities: None.

Lunch: Bring your lunch and water.

Leader: Cooper Breeden, cooperbreeden@gmail.com, 615-545-3277 Please contact the leader if you plan on attending!

MAY 17 (SATURDAY) FLAT ROCK CEDAR GLADES AND BARRENS, FIRE ADAPTED AND THRIVING!, RUTHERFORD CO.

Description: We will tour portions of the natural area that have been subject to habitat restoration and prescribed fire in recent years. We will look at how active management is benefiting native flowers across the site and see the benefits of applying fire to the landscape. Many native plants are fire-adapted, and we'll see how they have been affected. Panoramic views of native grasses will be a feature of this hike. Participants should be able to travel 2-3 miles over rocky trails and be comfortable venturing off the trail to view certain species. The terrain is relatively flat but shade from the sun is hard to come by in the glades. Please wear closed-toe shoes and be aware that there are no facilities on site. For guests traveling, there is camping and cabin rental available at Cedars of Lebanon State Park, just 20 minutes away. Note: There is a $10 fee. See the Natural Areas website to register and pay.

Tennessee milkvetch, *Astragalus tennesseensis*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Meeting Place/Time: Flat Rock State Natural Area trailhead parking lot, 2423 Factory Road, Murfreesboro, TN (35.858539,-86.295644) 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Central.

Difficulty: Easy, but the trail is rocky, and much of the area is in the sun.

Facilities: None

Lunch: None. The hike will end at 12:00 PM.

Leader: Sam King, sam.king@tn.gov, 629-215-0194

JUNE 21 (SATURDAY) RITA VENABLE POLLINATOR GARDEN, WILLIAMSON CO. (THIS EVENT IS FULL)

Description: The garden and landscape of Rita and Phil Venable is in suburban Franklin near the Cool Springs mall. This garden will showcase three main ideas. One idea is how to cut down on your lawn by cutting it in half. The second idea is how to recover from the removal of 40' pin oak trees (diseased, had to be removed) and transitioning from a shade garden to a sun garden using mostly native plants. The third idea is how to use native plants in the landscape to help control erosion and provide habitat for pollinators. Rita and Phil must work within the guidelines of their HOA and want to do it in a friendly way that is also in step with the neighborhood. You can expect to see Southern bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla sessilifolia*), early sunflower (*Heliopsis helianthoides*), phlox 'Jeana' (*Phlox paniculata 'Jeana'*), buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*), lanceleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis lanceolata*), golden St. Johnswort (*Hypericum frondosum*), narrowleaf mountain mint (*Pycnanthemum tenuifolium*), smooth Ruellia (*Ruellia strepens*), beardtongue (*Penstemon spp.*) and many others. Both the front yard and back gardens will be open for viewing, and most plants will be labeled.

Meeting Place/Time: Please register so we know how many to expect and can let neighbors know to accommodate parking. Limit of 30 participants. The address will be sent upon registration. 9:00 – 11:00 AM Central.

Buttonbush, *Cephalanthus occidentalis*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Difficulty: Easy

Facilities: On-site

Lunch: There are restaurants and parks nearby for those who want to eat lunch afterward. A list of parks will be provided upon registration.

Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip, but **THIS EVENT IS FULL at the time of publication.**

Leader: Rita Venable, rita@ritavenable.com

JULY 19 (SATURDAY) SAND PRAIRIE CONSERVATION AREA, SCOTT CO, MISSOURI

Description: Sand prairies are a rare habitat formed from alluvial sand deposits of major rivers, in this case, the Mississippi/Ohio River systems. Technically in tall grass prairies the grasses share dominance with several sedge family members. Surveys done in the 2007/2008 growing seasons identified 220 taxa, including 10 species considered rare in Missouri and one new state record. Highlight species for our trip include jointweed (*Polygonella americana*), dotted beebalm (*Monarda punctata*), and slender rushfoil (*Croton michauxii*).

Meeting Place/Time: Sand Prairie Conservation Area parking lot. From I-55, take exit 80 (Benton) to Highway 77 (right or southeast) for 2 miles to County Rd. 333 north (left), then 2 miles to the parking lot on the right. 10:00 AM Central.

Dotted Beebalm, *Monarda punctata*
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Difficulty: Easy, but heat could be an issue.

Facilities: None

Lunch: Bring snacks/water. Plan on an early dinner at Lambert's in Sikeston.

Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip. To register and reserve your spot visit https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents, select the fieldtrip and "Get Tickets." Enter the number of tickets and continue. Fill in required information and submit the order. **There is a limit of 25 participants.**

Leader: Bart Jones, bjones7777@hotmail.com (901-485-2745)

AUGUST 2 (SATURDAY) SUMMER ORCHIDS OF THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU, VAN BUREN CO.

Description: We will explore a few sites on the Cumberland Plateau renowned for their orchid flora, driving between sites. We should see *Platanthera (*fringed orchids*), ciliaris (*yellow fringed orchid*), cristata (*crested fringed orchid*), integrilabia (*monkeyface orchid*), and clavellata (*small green woodland orchid*)*, as well as one or two species of *Spiranthes (*ladies'-tresses*)*.

Meeting Place/Time: Tentatively, Fall Creek Falls Volunteer Fire Department, 24897 State Route 30, due east of Spencer, TN, at 10:00 AM Central.

Difficulty: Easy, but there are wet, boggy areas to navigate. Be prepared for the heat!

Facilities: None

Lunch: Bring to eat in the field.

Registration: Online registration is provided for this field trip. To register and reserve your spot visit https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/nx/portal/neonevents/events?path=%2Fportal%2Fevents, select the fieldtrip and "Get Tickets." Enter the number of tickets and continue. Fill in required information and submit the order.

Leader: Chuck Wilson, chuckwilson5@bellsouth.net, 423-875-9625

Yellow-fringed orchid, *Platanthera ciliaris*
photo by Dennis Horn

SEPTEMBER 6 (SATURDAY) VAN BUREN COUNTY POWERLINE

Goldenrod and Asters
photo by Donna Bollenbach

Description: This is a joint outing for TNPS and TCWP. It is a rerun of the best powerline fall wildflower show I've seen. Hopefully, some of the bog orchids will still be in flower but we will mostly see goldenrods and asters.

Meeting Places/Times:

1. Shell Station on the south side of the Peavine Rd. exit in Crossville **(9:00 AM central time, 10:00 AM eastern)**

2. Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at **8:45 a.m. Eastern**

Difficulty: We will walk on flattish ATV roads with a short outing into a boggy area. Total walking distance is about two miles. The road is a little rough but quite drivable for most vehicles. Heat may be a problem, but we will be close to our cars and thus air conditioning.

Facilities: The meeting places.

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray.

Leaders: Margaret Cumberland and Larry Pounds. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact in case of cancellation. Phone/email: 919-339-0072, meshearin@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 13 (SATURDAY) THE POINT TRAIL AT OBED WILD AND SCENIC RIVER, MORGAN CO.

Description: This is a joint outing for TNPS and TCWP. The trail runs along the top of bluffs that lead to the confluence of the Obed River and Clear Creek. There are a lot of fun wildflowers out on the bluffs, and beautiful views of the river.

Meeting Places/Times:

1. Parking lot at the trailhead for Lilly Bluff Overlook and The Point (920 Ridge Rd, Lancing, TN 37770) at 10:00 AM Eastern.

2. Oak Ridge at the Gold's Gym/Books-A-Million parking lot (meet at the end close to S. Illinois Avenue, near Salsarita's) in time to leave Oak Ridge at 9:00 AM Eastern.

Difficulty: The trail is moderate, with some strenuous spots. It's 3.8 miles round trip.

Facilities: The trailhead has bathrooms.

Lunch: Bring water, lunch, and bug spray

Leader: Margaret Cumberland. If you RSVP, it helps with planning and allows contact in case of cancellation. Phone/email: 919-339-0072, meshearin@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATES
SEPTEMBER 26-28 (FRIDAY-SUNDAY)
TNPS ANNUAL MEETING
PICKWICK LANDING STATE PARK, HARDIN CO.

Look for more details in upcoming newsletters, the website, Facebook and via email.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society Presents

2025 Native Plant Seminars

Each year the Tennessee Native Plant Society hosts monthly Native Plant Seminars from January through November. These events are held via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Central (7:30 p.m. Eastern) and last about one hour. All members, and potential members, are welcome to join the seminars at no cost. The link to join each seminar will be posted on the *Seminars* and *Calendar* pages of our website: www.tnps.org

Seminar speakers are drawn from our knowledgeable membership, from professionals across the state, and from the professors and students studying our Tennessee native plants. A range of topics will be covered that may include plants that are currently blooming, native plants in our yards, current research on native plants, protections for native plants, and so much more.

Join us for an hour a month to learn more about Tennessee native plants.

2025 TNPS Native Plant Seminar Schedule

March18 -Bieke Puncochar, *Neighbors 4 Native Plants*

April 15 - Steve Murphree, *Galls and Gall Makers*

May 20 - Rosanna Ohlsson, *Collecting and Saving Seeds from Native Plants*

June 17 - Holly Taylor, *TSP Highlights in Plant Conservation*

Additional Seminars will be listed on the website as they are scheduled.

Chasing Wildflowers (Continued from page 1)

Yellow trilliums, *Trillium luteum*, is found primarily from the Eastern Highland Rim eastward in Tennessee. In the Spring, many other Trilliums may be found throughout the state.

Native to the eastern half of North America, Virginia Bluebells, *Mertensia virginica*, may be seen in moist, rich, shady woodlands in Tennessee in Spring.

All photographs by Donna Bollenbach

In April and May, Dwarf Crested Iris, *Iris cristata*, may be seen in rich wooded slopes, bluffs, and stream banks.

When Are Dues Due?

Membership dues are due one year from the date of last payment. You will receive a reminder email 5 days before expiration asking you to renew. There is currently a grace period of 65 days in which you retain your membership status.

If you go into your membership portal (www.TNPS.org, and click the LOGIN button or https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/login) you will see when your membership is due to expire. You may also renew your membership, if it is near expiration, and sign up for auto renewal if you wish. Payment is either by credit card or delayed payment if you mail a check. If there have been changes to your email or physical address, please update your membership.

If you have any questions or problems, contact support@tnps.org.

TNPS Newsletter
P.O. Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

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Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*):

A Exotic Invasive invading Tennessee

by Allan Trently

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Back in 2008, when I first started working for the Division of Natural Areas, I was tasked with surveying for cogongrass in west Tennessee. This federally regulated noxious weed was prevalent south of the state. So far, in west Tennessee, we have only had one occurrence. Plants were found in Lexington, Henderson County back in 2006. Luckily, the landowner recognized the grass and had it eradicated. If it had not gone untreated, it would likely have spread. Cogongrass is ranked in the top ten worst weeds in the world. Nobody wants this exotic invasive in Tennessee.

Cogongrass can completely take over an area
Photo courtesy of Allan Trently

Once cogongrass invades an area, under the right conditions it can spread rapidly through seeds and rhizomes. It can spread along roadsides, lawns, wetlands, agricultural fields, and forests. And when it invades an area, it takes over. Other than trees and shrubs, there are no other plants coexisting within an infestation. And trees and shrubs are not completely safe.

Cogongrass is highly flammable, and when it burns, it burns very hot. Hot enough to kill woody plants. Fire doesn't kill the cogongrass; it makes it thrive. And nothing eats it. Livestock and wildlife avoid it because of its high silica content. Farmers hate this plant. Foresters hate it. Conservationists despise it. We need to keep it from spreading in Tennessee!

I surveyed along roads all over west Tennessee. A few times I pulled over thinking I found it. After some investigation, what I found was silver beardgrass (*Bothriochloa laguroides*). This exotic grass closely resembles cogongrass but can be differentiated by comparing inflorescences, leaves, stems, and/or roots. There are many online sites to learn cogon identification. A good start is https://www.cogongrass.org/. Another site

(Continued on page 4)

TNPS Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Tennessee Native Plant Society and is published four times a year, generally March, June, September, and December.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) was founded in 1978. Its purposes are to assist in the exchange of information and encourage fellowship among Tennessee's botanists, both amateur and professional; to promote public education about Tennessee flora and wild plants in general; to provide, through publication of a newsletter or journal, a formal means of documenting information on Tennessee flora and of informing the public about wild plants; and to promote the protection and enhancement of Tennessee's wild plant communities.

Membership Dues:
Individual/Family: $20
Student: Complimentary
Institution: $50
Life:$250
Join online or renew via the member portal, or mail a check to:
Tennessee Native Plant Society
PO Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

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Donna Bollenbach

President's Perspective

As we approach mid-May, it's hard to believe how quickly the year is flying by! We've made meaningful progress toward our goals and continue to see a steady increase in new members in all categories. Our engagement with biology departments at colleges and universities has been strong, including onsite events such as herbarium tours at the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga, participation in the Earth Day celebration at Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, and a promising connection with the Biology Department at the University of Memphis. Meanwhile, our Education Outreach teams have been very active at events across the state. I'm sincerely grateful to all of you who have contributed your time and talents to our outreach efforts.

How about those TNPS field trips! A big shout-out to Bart Jones for his outstanding work in organizing them, and heartfelt thanks to all the field trip leaders who helped make this year one of the best yet for TNPS outings. We're excited to see the reports and photos from these adventures! Tennessee is home to an incredible variety of unique sites and plant life, and it's a true pleasure to share these natural treasures with our members and the wider community. This year, we also piloted online registration via Neon CRM for selected field trips, which was well received and sets the stage for broader use in future seasons.

Planning for the TNPS 2025 Annual Conference is almost finished. A big thank you goes to Bart Jones for his leadership in coordinating the event, securing the venue at Pickwick Landing State Park, and putting together a great lineup of programs for our attendees. Lodging information, including special discount rates, was recently shared. Additional details will be provided in this newsletter.

External communication plays a vital role in an organization's growth and development. I've been pleased to witness the dedication of the Facebook team under Anne Ballentine's new leadership, as well as the ongoing strong support from Karen Hill for maintaining the TNPS website.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to the Executive Committee and Board of Directors for their support in handling the organization's administrative responsibilities and helping to shape TNPS's strategic direction. We remain committed to strengthening the TNPS experience and exploring new and creative ways to support our programs financially. Look out for more updates in the months to come.

Lastly, I want to extend a sincere thank you to all our TNPS members for your ongoing support. I look forward to getting to know more of you in the coming months. As an all-volunteer organization, TNPS thrives on the passion and dedication of its members. I invite you to share your ideas, time, and talents to help us grow and to make a meaningful impact.

With gratitude,

Mitchell

President,
Tennessee Native Plant Society

Meet Us at Pickwick Landing!

TNPS will gather at Pickwick Landing State Park the weekend of September 26-28 for our annual membership meeting. The festivities begin Friday afternoon with a meet-n-greet plus snacks before a "meat and three" buffet dinner. After dinner, we will enjoy a talk highlighting the *40th Anniversary of Tennessee's Rare Plant Act* by Todd Crabtree (state botanist and TNPS member).

Pickwick Lake

Saturday will consist of a full day of activities, beginning with box lunch pickup and departure for two field trips, a visit to the property of local resident John Ross, and the other to Walker Branch State Natural Area. We will split into two groups, with each group going to one site in the morning, then going to the other site in the afternoon. For those who might not feel up to hiking all day, we will have a workshop at the conference center featuring John Manion, who will lead us in "Understanding Botanical Names". Our dinner for the night will feature a fajita bar with the fixings. After dinner, our business meeting will be followed by our keynote speaker, Dr. Jon Evans (U. of the South Professor of Biology). Jon will be speaking about *the discovery of a new Phacelia species* near the campus.

Sunday, after breakfast on your own and check out, we will enjoy a quick hike along the Island Loop Trail before we all head home.

Please note: Attendance is limited to members and their families. TNPS is not able to offer this opportunity to the public.

Please check online for more details as we work them out. A final itinerary will be posted soon. Registration forms with payment options will be posted at that time. Room reservations can be made by following this link: Pickwick Landing State Park — Tennessee State Parks. We have a block of 50 rooms in the lodge reserved at the price of $157/night. Only make your reservations by following this link, as it is connected to our special room rate. The deadline to receive the reduced rate is August 12, 2025. This is a hard deadline, so any rooms not reserved will be released, and reservations made after August 12 will be charged the normal room rate of $240-257. So don't wait, reserve your room now!

We look forward to seeing you in September!

The beautiful Lodge and Conference Center at Pickwick Landing

About the Park (from the Pickwick Landing State Park Website):

Pickwick Landing State Park is located just south of Pickwick Dam, 14 miles south of Savannah, in Hardin County. Noted for its excellent water recreation the lake and river offer fishing, boating, swimming, and a marina. Accommodations in the park include a lodge and restaurant, cabins, and camping. In addition to water sports, guests enjoy golfing, birding, picnicking, disc golf, nature walks, and tennis. The park contains 1,416 acres of forested hills and hollows.

(Continued from page 1)

worth visiting is the Alabama Cooperative Extension's field guide to the identification of cogongrass: https://www.aces.edu/blog/topics/forestry-wildlife/field-guide-to-the-identification-of-cogongrass-with-comparisons-to-other-look-a-like-species/.

Through all my surveying in west Tennessee in 2008, I did not find any cogongrass infestations. That all changed in 2024. Botanist Adam Datillo and I located a small infestation in McNairy County on November 7th. The next day we found another infestation, this time in Hardeman County. To make things worse, cogongrass was reported in five locations East of the Tennessee River from 2023 to 2024. It looks like Tennessee has been invaded!

The best way to eradicate cogongrass is through early detection followed by treatments. This is why surveys are very important. Once you learn how to identify the grass, anytime you go out for a drive, keep an eye out for it. Though it can be spotted and identified anytime of year, the best time to survey is mid-April to early summer when it is in flower. If you think you found it, pull over if safe and get photographs. If you pull a plant to photograph rhizomes, leave the pulled plant with the infestation. Be very careful not to get seeds on your clothing, and don't drive through the infestation. We don't want to inadvertently spread seeds. Lastly, do not try to eradicate the infestation, even if small, through pulling, since pulling is not effective.

Inflorescence of Cogongrass
Photo courtesy of Allan Trently

The last step is to report the infestation. If you think you have an infestation, report it to Adam Dattilo, Vegetation Ecologist at Adam.Dattilo@tn.gov and to Allan.Trently@tn.gov. Once reported, a plan will be executed to treat and eventually eradicate the infestation.

TN-IPC Board Members Sought

The Tennessee Invasive Plant Council (TN-IPC) is recruiting interested individuals to serve on its board of directors. TN-IPC's primary mission is to raise public awareness about the spread and ecological harm of invasive nonnative plants in Tennessee, facilitate the exchange of information regarding management, control, and native plant alternatives through our website and area workshops, and initiate actions to prevent further invasive plant introductions.

TN-IPC's quarterly meetings are conducted online during the week and last 2 to 3 hours. Anyone with an interest in protecting Tennessee's natural communities and promoting native species is welcome to join a meeting. If you would like to be notified of our next board meeting (likely in June), please contact Margie Hunter, mhunter55@comcast.net. Visit our website, tnipc.org, to learn more about our organization.

Forest Learning Program at Red Bank Elementary School

Contributed by Mitchell Kent

Although TNPS typically concentrates on programs in higher education, we recently had the pleasure of visiting students at the opposite end of the educational journey. Red Bank Elementary School in Chattanooga, TN, features a unique Forest Learning Program that weaves outdoor, nature-based experiences into its core curriculum. This initiative is designed to connect students with the natural world as a regular and meaningful part of their education.

In mid-April, my wife Nancy and I had the chance to visit with the Forest Learning first-grade class and teachers, Sally Warm and Rebecca Cotton, in their outdoor classroom to learn more about the program. We were impressed that these six- and seven-year-olds already possessed a foundational understanding of native plants and could identify invasive species like privet in their surroundings. As we explored the area together, we identified and discussed various native plants and trees, with several students independently pointing out invasive ones. Their enthusiasm and curiosity were infectious, and they asked us a wide range of thoughtful questions throughout our visit.

Here are some key features of the Forest Learning program:

• Regular Outdoor Learning: Students, in Forest Kindergarten and First Grade, spend up to half of their instructional day outdoors, engaging directly with the natural world. Activities include exploring the environment, hands-on science, nature journaling, and mindfulness exercises.

Curriculum Integration: The program aligns outdoor learning with academic standards, ensuring that activities in the forest setting support core subjects like science, literacy, and math. Teachers are trained to connect classroom concepts with real-world, nature-based experiences.

• Benefits for Students: Research and experience at Red Bank Elementary show that participation in the forest program supports students' physical and emotional health, increases engagement, and fosters a joy of learning.

• Outdoor Classroom Infrastructure: The school has developed dedicated outdoor learning spaces, including a natural courtyard, gardens, and seating made from tree stumps and repurposed materials, to support ongoing outdoor instruction.

• Professional Development: Red Bank Elementary is recognized as a model for forest school practices. It partners with organizations like the Forest School Teacher Institute to provide training for educators regionally and nationally, sharing best practices in nature-based education.

Program Impact and Community Involvement

• The Forest Learning Program has become a central part of Red Bank Elementary's identity, attracting families and educators interested in innovative, experiential learning.

• The initiative has received community support through grants, donations, and partnerships with local businesses and organizations to enhance outdoor facilities and resources.

Sally Warm, a first-grade teacher at Red Bank Elementary in the Hamilton County School District, has been named the 2025 Elementary Teacher of the Year. With seven years of teaching experience, she is celebrated for her creative and impactful use of outdoor education. Warm was instrumental in growing Red Bank's Forest School Program and designed a first-grade curriculum that blends Tennessee state standards with nature-based learning. TNPS proudly congratulates Sally on this well-deserved recognition and her outstanding contributions to education!

References:

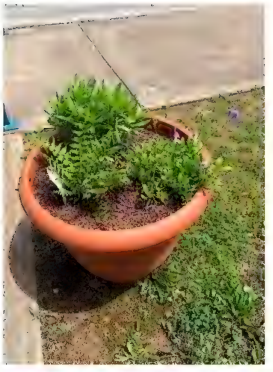
Red Bank Elementary Forest Learning Program on HCDE Website: https://rbe.hcde.org/innovation

Red Bank Elementary Forest Learning Program on YouTube Video: https://youtu.be/DMv4_mpETaI

Grants 4 Native Plants 2024-5

Our first year for awarding Grants 4 Native Plants has concluded with receipt of the end of school year reports and photos. Summaries of those reports follow. We also offer our thanks to the mentors who did so much to enrich this process and make it meaningful to students and educators alike. Thank you Glinda Rhodes, Bart Jones, Rebecca Abel, Terri Joyce, Robin Cooper, Phyllis Kitzler, and Kate Patrick. *(Please note, the reports are written exactly as they were submitted, misspellings and all.)*

Decaturville Elementary School in Decaturville



Native plants were installed along both sides of a sidewalk leading to a flag pole. A few ferns remain in pots waiting to be planted in front of the school sign after it is repaired. Students Madison and Fisher wrote the following report:

We pechased some Tennessee native plants to around our flag pole. We also learned about Symbiotic relationships between two or more organisms. These relationships can include mutualism for example, the plants that we have planted around our flag pole because the bees and plants both benefit. The flowers benefit from being pollinated and the bees benefit from eating the pollen. In conclusion we learned a lot about symbiotic relationships from getting these plants.

Arlington Middle School Environmental Club in Memphis

A series of raised beds were replanted with native plants by the Environmental Club in the fall. A report by student A. Brooks describes the importance of the project to them.

My experience in the Environmental Club was so much fun. Learning about Tennessee natives was especially interesting. We went through the entire process of planting and seeing it grow a few months later. Not only did I learn so much about our states' natives, but it also really helped me learn how to plant them at my own house. Maintaining these plants was especially important, and everything I learned of how to manage these plants was interesting. In the fall, we all planted these natives with the help of a great mentor. We learned about how our native pollinators positively affected our environment and the hands-on part significantly helped that. Natives, as I learned, are super important to plant because; they support a large biodiversity, a native creates a healthier ecosystem, and it enhances the environments stability. Overall, I had a wonderful experience.

(Continued on page 7)

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Normal Park Museum Magnet School

Members of the Green STEAM Club created a rain garden using a variety of native wildflowers and shrubs. The students described the experience:

What we planted: Cardinal flower, Baby joe pyeweed, Eastern bluestar, Virginia bluebell, Button bush shrub, Green and gold, Cupplant, Eastern Bluestar

Native plants are plants that are made to grow in a specific environment which makes them native to that place. So in our garden we plant lots of native plants so they can grow successfully! -Eleanor Beukema 4th

The process of making our garden was both simple and complicated, the first step was to gather information about the native plants, their habitat, and polonatters . The next step we took was to plant the plants, and make them extra healthy and add mulch. Then we grew more plants in pots to sell at Normalpalooza. Then we grew more plants when we had tons of rain. And lastly, we check on our plants daily to make sure they're OK! -Samara Brigner

The planting and viewing of our garden was really fun! The first month of doing Green STEAM we had planted our native plants then a few months later we saw a few sprouts! I really enjoyed watching them grow during the year. Everybody in my grade who was in the club always went straight to the garden at recess or asked "How's the Garden doing?" We all really enjoyed the process of planting and watching it grow! -Phoebe Anderson

We planted many different plants. For example milkweed. I really enjoyed clearing the garden. I did not enjoy Poison Ivy. -Audrey Geraci

I enjoyed trying to solve the problems that we encountered. People stepping on the garden? Boom,☐ signs. Signs not working? Poof, ☐ fence. I feel like this helped me grow as a problem solver and helped me work with the people around me. Making the garden not only helped me grow but helped me learn. I had no idea that there was such a thing as a "rain garden." We also found interesting items, such as an old baseball glass, tons of trash, and clay. This helped me see how much the world needs gardens.- Rowan Williams 5th

Nolensville High School in Nolensville

Shrubs and trees were planted in front of the school late this spring. A student describes what this garden means to them:

I am honored to help set a space for future students to enjoy. Not only for the environmental benefits, but physiological effects for the students. In a school of brick and mortar, surrounded by lakes of pavement, and only specks grass (emphasis on just grass). To have a diversity in plants, shapes, aromas, aesthetics attributed by the garden will spurr dopamine release to students and faculty. Being around in a green garden can ot only boost dopamine levels but reduce stress hormone release. This class has brought me a far greater appreciation for nature and conservation, and getting to positively give back to

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

nature is exciting.

West High School Environmental Club in Knoxville

Biology teacher David Krebs writes:

Thanks to the generous support from the native plant grant, the West High School Garden Club successfully expanded our native plant garden and deepened our educational outreach. The grant allowed us to purchase 100 native plants from the Native Plant Rescue Squad, as well as essential materials including wood and paint to build and decorate a garden arbor, six bags of cement for installation, and additional wood to construct a free community library box.

Our native plant garden has become a living classroom. Students used the space to study plant reproduction, the complex co-evolution of insects and native flora, and the ecological risks of nonnative plants. Lessons focused on how invasive species disrupt biodiversity by outcompeting native species—especially due to mismatched growth seasons, root systems, and lack of natural predators.

Beyond the garden, students took initiative in a range of sustainability-focused activities. As part of the Knoxville Tree Master Plan, they organized large tree planting days in low-canopy neighborhoods—knocking on doors, engaging with residents, and planting trees. The club also hosted a series of guest speakers who explored human-plant relationships, … and more. We're proud of the impact this grant helped make possible—both in the ground and in our community.

A student reports:

Over the past year, our school's native garden has improved significantly and truly cultivated a community across our student body. We've been able to plant several native plants including beebalm, aster, goldenrod, and day flowers while educating our environmental club and others about these plants and their importance. Furthermore, we've been able to build connections across our school and the greater Knoxville community through community plantings in which we've planted free native plants for our neighbors to increase the canopy. From our garden days in which we've created a true community

Grants 4 Native Plants Now Open for 2025-26

Grants 4 Native Plants Now Open for 2025-26. Year two of our Grants 4 Native Plants program has begun, with timelines, grant application forms, and other information now available at: https://tnps.org/grants/. **All applications must be received by June 30,2025.** After reviewing the applications, TNPS will award $500 grants to a select number of schools (public, private, or homeschool associations) in Tennessee.

Schools must use a hands-on student curriculum with students doing the preparation, planting, and maintenance of the native plants selected for their native plant garden.

Grant awards will be made by August 1st. At that time contact information will be provided for a mentor who will assist in decisions regarding site selection, plant choices, planting techniques, and maintenance needs for their native plant project. Together, the teacher applicant, their principal, and the provided mentor will have one month to meet, complete and submit an Action Plan to TNPS. This is to ensure that the native plants will have an opportunity to thrive and that students will have an extended opportunity to learn about the benefits of our beautiful Tennessee native plants.

Please share this information with friends who are teachers, neighborhood schools, schools attended by your children or grandchildren, and any other appropriate contacts you may have. We would love to see native plants surrounding all our Tennessee schools, providing spaces where students can actively study the components and interactions of our native environment.

(*See the reports from out students and teachers from the 2024 grant recipients on pages* 6 - 8)

2025 TNPS Fieldtrip Reports

MARCH 22, WILDFLOWER SPOT ON THE N. WALKER ACCESS TO THE NORTH RIDGE TRAIL, ANDERSON COUNTY

Fieldtrip report by Margaret Cumberland

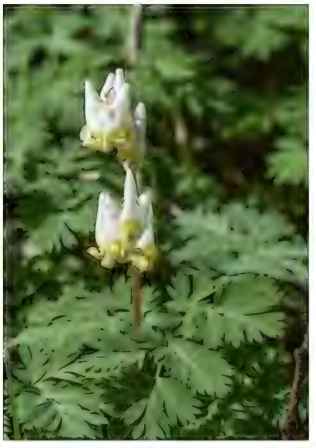
On March 22, Margaret Cumberland, with help from Larry Pounds, led a hike at the N. Walker Ln Access to the North Ridge Trail in Oak Ridge, TN. As one of the first hikes in the spring, over 30 people showed up ready to see some wildflowers!

This is an excellent area to see early spring wildflowers, and it did not disappoint. We saw blooming twin leaf, *Jeffersonia diphylla*, bloodroot, *Sanguinaria canadensis*, the start of trout lilies, *Erythronium americanum*, peak spring beauties, *Claytonia virginica*, and the highlight of the trail, dutchman's breeches, *Dicentra cucullaria*.

Trout lilies , *Erythronium americanum*
photo by D Bollenbach

The wildflowers were about 2 weeks behind what they have been the past many years, so we still had some harbinger-of-spring, *Erigenia bulbosa* around, but it was going to seed. The Solomon's seal, *Polygonatum biflorum*, celandine poppies, *Stylophorum diphyllum*, and fernleaf phacelia, *Phacelia bipinnatifida* were just starting to come out.

This area is so incredibly dense with wildflowers, we would only hike a few feet before stopping to admire something new. On our hike back out, we noticed that even more flowers had opened up as the day warmed up, making the return trip even more enjoyable than the hike in!



Dutchman's breeches, *Dicentra cucullaria*
photo by D Bollenbach

APRIL 12 FROZEN HEAD WILFLOWER WALK, MORGAN COUNTY

Fieldtrip report by Larry Pounds

We had a large group of 27 people. Our early start allowed us to find plenty of parking at the trailhead. We visited during a peak time for flowering. However, a week later, the large white trillium, *Trillium grandiflorum*, and the spotted mandarin, *Prosartes maculatum*, were in poor condition. On the other hand, the dwarf ginseng, *Panax trifolius*, remained lovely throughout the period.

Dwarf ginseng, *Panax trifolius*
photo by Dennis Horn

We arrived too early to see the showy orchis, *Galearis spectabilis*, which was just beginning to flower. A week later, it was at its peak. The lesson learned is that to see everything, especially wildflowers in prime conditions, it's essential to visit often.

Showy orchis, *Galearis spectabilis*,
photo by D Bollenbach

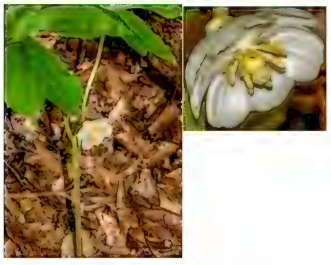
APRIL 13, DEAN'S WOODS WILDFLOWER SAUNTER, KNOX CO.

Fieldtrip report by Mac Post

Dean's Woods Wildflower Walk Participants

Wild geranium, *Geranium maculatum Photo* by John F White

This 20-acre patch of woods in south Knoxville is special. Owned by the University of Tennessee, it is mostly old-growth forest with an undisturbed soil on a north-facing slope, making it ideal for a surprising diversity of spring wildflowers. Seventeen wildflower enthusiasts spent 2 hours traveling less than 2 miles along the narrow trail, surrounded by carpets of spring ephemerals. Not counting exotics, we saw at least 25 species blooming, including some fairly rare ones. The trees and shrubs were well along in leafing out, so early ephemerals (dutchman's breeches, spring beauty, virginia bluebells, dwarf larkspur, perfoliate bellwort) were on their way out, while more shade-tolerant ones (Jack-in-the-pulpit, five species of trilliums, wild geranium, mayapple) were at their peak. If you want a pictorial overview of the plants we saw, contact John White (johntennffw@gmail.com) for his wonderful collection of photos from this outing assembled into single PDF



Mayapple, : *Podophyllum peltatum* photo by John F White

Dean's Woods is a remnant of what most of the ridge and valley region might have looked like pre-settlement. Located in a subdivision near downtown Knoxville, it provides quick access to the University of Tennessee for teaching, research, and study. It allows classes to visit, see, smell, touch, and hear plants and animals naturally. Here is a website with some information on the history of Dean Woods - https://biologygreenhouse.utk.edu/DeanInfo.html

Invasive plants are becoming an issue, creeping downslope from neighboring yards. The main threats are amur bush honeysuckle, winter creeper, privet, burning bush, autumn olive, and english ivy. Student clubs and other interested people and organizations (Harvey Broome Group, Sierra Club, Ijams Nature Center, for example) get involved in weed removal events there. If you would like to help, contact Jeff Martin, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department, jmarti90@utk.edu, (865) 974-1518. He organizes a spring and fall cleanup every year.

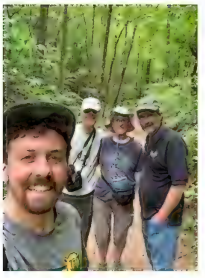
MAY 3, LAUREL RUN PARK, HAWKINS COUNTY

Fieldtrip report by Ken Rea

Laurel Run Park, a Hawkins County Park, is situated along the Holston River in Northeast Tennessee and the main trail goes up Laurel Run, along which is an idea place for wildflowers. The hike goes past two small waterfalls and connects with Bays Mountain Park. The hike was a joint hike with Bays Mountain Park and TNPS and was led by Bob Culler and Ken Rea.

Guyandotte beauty, *Synandra hispidula Photo by Ken Rea*

The Guyandotte beauty, *Synandra hispidula*, was the star of the hike as it covered the hillsides. Some other highlights included largeleaf waterleaf, *Hydrophyllum macrophyllum*, dwarf larkspur, *Delphinium tricorne*, alternate-leaf dogwood, *Cornus alternifolia*, umbrella-leaf magnolia, *Magnolia tripetala*, hearts-a-bustin, *Euonymus americanus*, and Jack-in-the-pulpit, *Arisaema triphyllum*.



Laurel Run Park Hike Participants

The competition was fierce to find the first Jack in flower and the dollar prize was won by Jan with JD in a close second.

MAY 10, KENTUCKY LADY'S SLIPPER, DECATUR COUNTY

Fieldtrip report by Bart Jones

Folks from Knoxville, Chattanooga, Nashville, Huntsville, AL and a few relatively local West Tennesseans gathered on a chilly morning in Decatur County to see the rare Kentucky lady's slipper, *Cypripedium kentuckiense*. Once at the site, the group was treated to a couple dozen plants in peak condition. Kentucky lady's slippers have the largest flowers of any Cypripedium and are quite impressive. This species ranges from Virginia to Texas, but is uncommon throughout, with the plants existing in very isolated populations. It is listed as endangered in Tennessee, officially occurring in three counties.

Kentucky lady's slipper, *Cypripedium kentuckiense*
Photo by Bart Jones

A few other plants in bloom nearby and at a roadside powerline cut were indicative of a prairie affinity. Among these were Indian pink, *Spigelia marilandica*, Small's ragwort, *Packera anonyma*, climbing milkvine, *Matelea obliqua*, hairy phlox, *Phlox amoena*, and Eastern white-flower beardtongue, *Penstemon tenuiflorus*.

After lunch we traveled to Natchez Trace State Park where we walked the Pin Oak Trail along Pin Oak Lake. This trail goes through several acidic seeps where ferns dominate the understory. We saw an amazing nine species of ferns: sensitive fern, *Onoclea sensibilis*, netted chain fern, *Woodwardia areolata*, broad beech fern, *Phegopteris*

Kentucky lady's slipper, *Cypripedium kentuckiense*
Photo by Bart Jones

Acidic seeps where ferns dominate the understory
Photo by Bart Jones

(Continued on page 13)

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hexagonoptera, royal fern, *Osmunda regalis*, Christmas fern, *Polystichum acrostichoides*, rattlesnake fern, *Botrypus virginianus*, New York fern, *Thelypteris noveboracensis*, lady fern, *Athyrium filix-femina*, as well as a few wildflowers, Virginia sweetspire, *Itea virginica*, primrose-leaved violet, *Viola primulifolia*, partridgeberry, *Mitchella repens*, and some very large Jack-in-the-pulpit, *Arisaema triphyllum*.

Indian Pink, *Spigelia marilandica*,
Photo by Bart Jones

Kentucky Lady Slipper Fieldtrip Participants

MAY 17, NORRIS GRIST MILL TO OBSERVATION POINT, ANDERSON COUNTY

Fieldtrip report by Larry Pounds

Nettleleaf sage, *Salvia urticifolia*,
Photo by Dennis Horn

It was a lovely day to be out in Norris Dam State Park and the Norris Watershed area. Margaret Cumberland led the field trip just a day before giving birth to her baby, Flora,

Most of the spring wildflowers had finished blooming, except for the largeleaf waterleaf, *Hydrophyllum macrophyllum*, black cohosh, *Actaea racemosa*, goatsbeard, *Aruncus dioicus*, and false goatsbeard, *Astilbe biternate*, were present but not yet in flower, which made them somewhat confusing to identify. It wasn't until the end of the trip that I figured them out.

We also encountered the uncommon native lily-of-the-valley, *Convallaria majuscule*, which had not yet bloomed. However, several species in flower provided a beautiful display: gray beardtongue, *Penstemon canescens*, Indian pink, *Spigelia marilandica*, southern ragwort, *Packera anonyma*, and nettleleaf sage, *Salvia urticifolia*,

Southern ragwort, *Packera anonyma*
Photo by Dennis Horn

Indian pink, *Spigelia marilandica*
Photo by D Bollenbach

Summer and Fall Fieldtrip Schedule

(Click the links for details about each fieldtrip)

6/21 Rita Venable Pollinator Garden, Williamson Co. **(FULL)**

7/19 Sand Prairie Conservation Area, Scott Co, Missouri
(Register Online)

8/2 Summer Orchids of the Cumberland Plateau, Van Buren Co.
(Register Online)

9/6 Van Buren County Powerline
(Register Online)

9/13 The Point Trail at Obed Wild and Scenic River, Morgan Co.
(Reserve by email)

9/26-28 TNPS Annual Meeting & Conference at Pickwick Landing SP, Hardin Co.

TECH TIPS: Navigating NEON

Your guide to making the most of the TNPS website and Neon Portal

Help Us Stay in Touch – Please Verify Your Email Address

Email is the primary way TNPS connects directly with our members. To ensure you continue receiving important updates and information, please take a moment to confirm that we have your most current email address on file.

To verify or update your email address:

1. Log in to the **Neon Member Login Portal**.
2. Click on the **"Communication Update"** button on the left side of the screen.
3. A "**Communication Preferences**" box will appear. Your email address will be listed a few lines below your name.
4. If an update is needed, simply delete the current email address and enter the new one.
5. Click the **"Submit"** button to save your changes.

If you have any questions about the Neon Member Login Portal or Neon CRM, please contact us at **support@tnps.org**.

Save the Dates

SEPTEMBER 26-28 (FRIDAY-SUNDAY)

TNPS ANNUAL MEETING

PICKWICK LANDING STATE PARK, HARDIN CO.

Look for more details in upcoming newsletters, the website, Facebook and via email.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society Presents

2025 Native Plant Seminars

Each year the Tennessee Native Plant Society hosts monthly Native Plant Seminars from January through November. These events are held via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Central (7:30 p.m. Eastern) and last about one hour. All members, and potential members, are welcome to join the seminars at no cost. The link to join each seminar will be posted on the *Seminars* and *Calendar* pages of our website: www.tnps.org

Seminar speakers are drawn from our knowledgeable membership, from professionals across the state, and from the professors and students studying our Tennessee native plants. A range of topics will be covered that may include plants that are currently blooming, native plants in our yards, current research on native plants, protections for native plants, and so much more.

Join us for an hour a month to learn more about Tennessee native plants.

2025 TNPS Native Plant Seminar Schedule

1/21 Connie Deegan, *Coexisting with Snakes* – *VIDEO*

2/18 Anthony Trimboli of Backyard Ecology, *Keystone Trees & Shrubs for the Volunteer State – VIDEO link unavailable after 3/20/25*

3/18 Bieke Puncochar, *Neighbors 4 Native Plants* – *VIDEO*

4/15 Steve Murphree, *Galls and Gall Makers* – *VIDEO*

5/20 Rosanna Ohlsson, *Collecting and Saving Seeds from Native Plants* – *VIDEO*

6/17 Holly Taylor, *TSP Highlights in Plant Conservation*

7/15 Adam Dattilo, *Stopping the Spread of Cogongrass in Tennessee*

8/19 Jennifer R Mandel, *Conservation, Agricultural Research & Education at the University of Memphis*

9/16 Kris Light, *The Birds and Bees of Wildflowers*

10/21 Eli Harris, *Floristic Diversity of Window Cliffs State Natural Area*

11/18 Steve Slack, *Straight Species vs Cultivars*

When Are Dues Due?

Membership dues are due one year from the date of last payment. You will receive a reminder email 5 days before expiration asking you to renew. There is currently a grace period of 65 days in which you retain your membership status.

If you go into your membership portal (www.TNPS.org, and click the LOGIN button or https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/login) you will see when your membership is due to expire. You may also renew your membership, if it is near expiration, and sign up for auto renewal if you wish. Payment is either by credit card or delayed payment if you mail a check. If there have been changes to your email or physical address, please update your membership.

If you have any questions or problems, contact support@tnps.org.

TNPS Newsletter
P.O. Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volume 49 Number 3 September 2025

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Nature Journaling Workshop at the Elsie Quarterman Festival , May 2, 2025

by Mary Priestley and Kim Sadler

Cedars of Lebanon State Park, the Center for Cedar Glade Studies, and the TN Native Plant Society partnered to host a Nature Journaling workshop at the Elsie Quarterman Wildflower Festival last spring. Workshop facilitators included TNPS members Joanna Brichetto, Kim Sadler, Mary Priestley, and four members from her 'nature journaler' group from Sewanee: Corinne Arnold, Margie Galligher, Marianne Sobey, and Deb Tucker.

Mary Priestley explained how one might set up a nature journal.

Joanna Brichetto shared excerpts from her book in talking about using narrative and storytelling in nature journaling.

As nature journaling "guru" John Muir Laws explains, nature journaling is basically the process of taking your experiences in a natural environment out of your head and onto paper. A journal entry consists of a combination of images, text, and numbers, and there are as many ways to do that as there are nature journalers. We wanted everyone to leave the workshop with a journaling technique they could call their own.

One of the techniques is using narrative and storytelling. This was demonstrated by Joanna Brichetto (author, *This is How a Robin Drinks: Essays on Urban Nature*) as she shared excerpts from her book, which were borne from her nature journal. We ventured to the butterfly garden at the Nature Center, where the variety of plants provided plenty of inspiration for journaling. To encourage everyone to think about narrative and delve beyond photographs and sketches, Joanna intrigued us all about the sex life of a paw paw flower (look it up and be amazed).

Mary Priestley explained how one might set up a journal, and suggested ideas for what a journal entry might look like. Then her fellow

(Continued on page 5)

TNPS Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Tennessee Native Plant Society and is published four times a year, generally March, June, September, and December.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) was founded in 1978. Its purposes are to assist in the exchange of information and encourage fellowship among Tennessee's botanists, both amateur and professional; to promote public education about Tennessee flora and wild plants in general; to provide, through publication of a newsletter or journal, a formal means of documenting information on Tennessee flora and of informing the public about wild plants; and to promote the protection and enhancement of Tennessee's wild plant communities.

Membership Dues:
Individual/Family: $20
Student: Complimentary
Institution: $50
Life:$250
Join online or renew via the member portal, or mail a check to:
Tennessee Native Plant Society
PO Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

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Kim Sadler, Treasurer

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Bart Jones

Larry Pounds

Mary Priestley

Ken Rea

Allen Trently

Newsletter Editor

Donna Bollenbach

President's Perspective

As the 2025 summer season winds down, it's the perfect time to reflect on what has so far been an incredible year for TNPS! We have organized field trips to sixteen sites across Tennessee, plus one in Missouri, bringing native plant enthusiasts together across the region. Several more field trips are scheduled before the year's end.

TNPS membership continues to grow, now exceeding 750 individuals, according to the latest Neon CRM data. Our "Grants for Native Plants" program has also grown, with grants recently awarded to ten schools for the 2025–2026 academic year—up from six last year.

We have hosted eight TNPS Online Seminars with three more scheduled this year. Additionally, we have conducted twelve TNPS education outreach events across the state, from Knoxville to Memphis. Other highlights include sponsoring participant Matthew Chrnalogar to attend the renowned Cullowhee Native Plant Conference in July at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC. See Matt's report on pages 6 and 7 of this newsletter.

The TNPS Board of Directors and I want to thank all of you who have contributed to making this year such a success! We are actively planning new strategies for fundraising and expanding our engagement with the education community. We want to continue our high-level offerings in the coming years. To do this, and to cover rising expenses of the organization, we are considering a modest increase in membership dues beginning January 1, 2026. (See page 14) A vote on the proposed increase in membership dues will take place at the 2025 TNPS Annual Conference and Membership Meeting to be held in late September.

We encourage all members to stay engaged and offer their continued support as we strive to enhance the programs and opportunities available through TNPS. Your involvement is vital in ensuring our mission and initiatives continue to flourish for the benefit of native plant environments and enthusiasts across our region.

With gratitude, Mitchell
President, TNPS

Meet Us at Pickwick Landing!

The schedule has been finalized for the TNPS annual membership meeting at Pickwick Landing State Park the weekend of September 26-28 with a great line-up of speakers and field trips ! See you there!

TNPS 2025 Annual Conference Schedule

Note: All times shown are Central Daylight Time.

The Pickwick Landing Hotel

Day 1: Friday, September 26. 2025

3:00 pm – Arrive and check-in for those staying at Pickwick Landing State Park

3:00 - 6:00 pm - Pick up your TNPS conference badge and attend a pre-conference social at the Conference Center.

6:00 to 7:00 pm – Friday night dinner at the Lodge for conference attendees

7:00 – 8:30 pm – Welcome and announcements, followed by the presentation by Tennessee state botanist, Todd Crabtree titled: *"40th Anniversary of Tennessee's Rare Plant Act"*

Day 2: Saturday, September 27, 2025

8:30 am – Meetup at park (location TBD) for travel to field trip location for hike at John Ross' Farm in the AM followed by Hike at Walker Branch State Natural Area in the afternoon. Trip leaders are Bart Jones and Allan Trently. Another trip reversing the two site locations may be scheduled depending on number of participants. Note: Box lunches will be available for participants prior to leaving the park.

The Pickwick Landing Marina

9:00 am – Attendees arriving on Saturday should pick up their conference badges at the TNPS information table in the Conference Center.

10:00 to 11:30 am - Presentation **"Understanding Botanical Names"** by John Manion, Coordinator of Education and Outreach, Overhill Gardens in Vonore, TN.

11:30 to 1:00 pm – Remaining box lunches will be available for pickup at the Conference Center for conference attendees.

1:00 pm - Meetup at Walker Branch State Natural Area for afternoon field trip led by Allan Trently. (Directions to site TBD.)

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm – Self-directed activities in the park for those people not attending the field trips.

6:00 to 7:00 pm – Saturday Night Dinner at the Lodge for conference attendees

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

7:00 to 8:00 pm - Presentation by Dr. John Evans, biology professor at the University of the South titled "*Discovery of a New Phacelia Species*"

8:00 – 9:00 pm - Annual TNPS Membership Meeting

Day 3: Sunday, 9/28/2025

7:00 – Breakfast on your own followed by check-out

8:30 am - Meetup at Lodge for Hike on the Island Loop Trail inside the park.

10:00 am – Conference concludes

View from the hotel of the Pickwick Lake and Dam

About the Park (from the Pickwick Landing Park Website):

Pickwick Landing State Park is located just south of Pickwick Dam, 14 miles south of Savannah, in Hardin County. Noted for its excellent water recreation the lake and river offer fishing, boating, swimming, and a marina. Accommodations in the park include a lodge and restaurant, cabins, and camping. In addition to water sports, guests enjoy golfing, birding, picnicking, disc golf, nature walks, and tennis. The park contains 1,416 acres of forested hills and hollows.

Grants 4 Native Plants - 2025 Winners

submitted by Karen Hill

In this second year of Grants 4 Native Plants, TNPS has seen a major increase in applicants, jumping from eight last year to twenty this year. Schools receiving the $500 grant for native plants and supplies also receive two reference books and an on-site mentor to assist and guide both teachers and students with plant selection, location, and maintenance. The hoped-for end product is a created or enhanced natural area for hands-on student environmental education, replete with native plants that provide both habitat and sustenance for pollinators and other wildlife.

We are excited to announce that our ten grant winners from across the entire state of Tennessee are: Bethel Springs Elementary (Lauren Sprayberry), Christiana Middle (Clara Kaplan), Clarksville Christian (Brandon Sheffield), Hickerson Elementary (Michelle Mullican), Hunters Lane High (Madline Licocci), Jackson Christian (Amy Groves), Mt Juliet Montessori Academy (Debi Miller), Rockwood High (Darcy Soard), Seedkeepers Forest School (Micky Morton), and White Stone Academy (Kim Young).

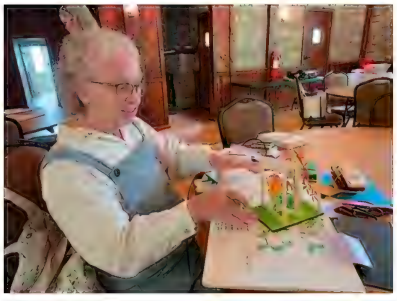
Mentors are drawn mainly from our TNPS membership living near the school. Most are native plant gardeners who willingly share their love of native plants and their experiences in dealing with them. If you're willing to serve as a mentor for a school near you in the future, please let us know at grants@tnps.org.

Some schools will plant in the fall, some in the spring, and some will do both. Hopefully, everyone will learn something in the process. Results will be shared in the June 2026 issue of our newsletter.

(Continued from page 1)

Deb Tucker talks about constructing phenology wheels.

Sewanee nature journalers each spent a few minutes at each table, describing some aspect of the practice that she particularly enjoys. Participants rotated in table teams for personal conversation with the Sewanee facilitator and to examine journal techniques more closely. Topics included drawing birds, making dyes from flower pigments, constructing phenology wheels, creating three-dimensional images, and actually constructing different kinds of journals from a variety of materials.



Margie Galligher demonstrates adding 3D images to nature journals.

Kim Sadler shared resources that can assist the nature journaling process, such as field guides, like the *Wildflowers of Tennessee, the Ohio Valley, and the Southern Appalachians: the Official Guide of the Native Plant Society*, and *Limestone Cedar Glades: An Introduction to Some Common and Rare Species*. She also discussed appropriate materials that withstand the elements, like mechanical pencils, waterproof pens, good-quality journal paper, plus other tools like a small watercolor paint set and colored pencils.

Marianne Sobey displays a palette of pigments made from flowers.

We deemed the workshop a success — the participants seemed to have as much fun as we did. We hope some of them will be inspired to make nature journaling a regular part of how they interact with the natural world. Tentative plans are in place to offer the workshop again next year at the Elsie Quarterman Wildflower Festival May 1, 2026 at Cedars of Lebanon State Park. Many thanks to TNPS for helping sponsor this event!

We ventured to the butterfly garden at the Nature Center, where the variety of plants provided plenty of inspiration for journaling.

Transitions, and a Thank you...

We would like to recognize and sincerely thank our Newsletter Editor, Donna Bollenbach, for her outstanding dedication and hard work over the past three years. Donna has recently decided to step down from her role to care for her disabled son in Houston, and her departure leaves very big shoes to fill.

Throughout her time as editor, Donna has consistently gone above and beyond by crafting engaging newsletters, curating compelling content and visuals, coordinating with Field Trip leaders, managing timelines, and handling newsletter distributions with care and precision.

Thank you, Donna, for your incredible service and commitment to our organization. Your presence will be deeply missed. Best regards from your TNPS team.

As Donna transitions out of her role, we are looking for someone to step forward as our next Newsletter Editor. If you enjoy writing, organizing content, and helping to keep our community connected, this could be a wonderful opportunity to get more involved. Please reach out if you are interested or would like to learn more.

Donna's note: It has been a great pleasure to serve as your newsletter editor. I will miss the role and the people. To those considering taking on this task: Every 3 months, you have the opportunity to get creative. It is so much fun. I will gladly help you transition into the role.

The Cullowhee Native Plant Conference, an Educational and Impactful Experience *by Matthew Chrnalogar , recipient of the TNPS conference scholarship for 2025*

Taking place in the mountains of western North Carolina, the Cullowhee Native Plant Conference delivered a joyful, impactful, and educational experience I am eager to return to. Over the course of five days, my colleagues and I attended various field trips and many presentations on a variety of topics. In the heart of the conference was a market of vendors selling native plants, art, left-handed tools, tinctures, clothing, and other unique items, many of which were hand-crafted.

The conference begins with various field trips, which attendees rush to register for before they fill up. Some of these trips include kayaking the Little Tennessee River, taking an Ethnobotanical tour in Panthertown, visiting the North Carolina Arboretum, learning how to landscape with moss, and visiting the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness, a remnant of old-growth forest with centuries-old Tulip Poplars. I am grateful I was able to attend a field trip diving into Graminoids: grasses and grass-like plants such as sedges and rushes. A truly fascinating family of plants with exceptional winter interest! The teacher of this class, Scott Ward, led a lab examining the morphology of various species and gave us a crash course on their biology with a focus on differentiating between three types of graminoids: rushes, sedges, and grasses. After lunch, we went on a short hike to apply our newly gleaned knowledge. Despite the short distance hiked, we found many examples of graminoids thanks to Scott's sharp eye.

There was a diversity of talks to choose from during the conference, some of which occurred simultaneously. My colleagues and I divided and conquered, each attending different sessions and returning to compare notes. Some themes we walked away with were the importance of gardening for moths, the importance of using non-violent language when discussing native ecology and restoration, and developing an understanding and respect for indigenous knowledge in our endeavors to restore functional ecology in the southeast and elsewhere.

Attendees were lucky to hear not one, but two talks by Doug Tallamy, an entomologist who is passionate about teaching us all about native plants and the insects that rely on them, especially moths. Doug first introduced us to Homegrown National Park, an organization that raises awareness of the importance of incorporating native plants in our landscapes at home, work, and school. By beginning to replace lawns with native plants, habitat for wildlife can expand in urban environments. His advice: "If you don't have access to native plants or seeds, simply remove an invasive plant and observe what grows." Many soils still contain native seed banks that are waiting for the right conditions to germinate. Among these plants are numerous hosts for moth caterpillars. Moth species far outnumber butterfly species and are critical for feeding wildlife that depend on them to raise their young, like birds and bats. Moths are so varied, and many are strikingly beautiful, including their wild caterpillar forms.

Matthew (left) with colleagues at the Cullowhee Native Plant

Birder and conservationist J. Drew Lanham asked the conference a thought-provoking question: "What is native enough?" This is a question that needs great consideration within the native plant community. Is something bad because it does not have a deep history in a place? Do transplants deserve to be eliminated just because they are not "native" to a region or are not useful in our eyes? Or is it possible that we can coexist with some of these plant and insect relatives that serve to promote functional ecology in our communities? For example, Japanese beetles may provide a source of food for birds. Borage, native to Europe and Africa, is a powerhouse flower and nectar producer, replenishing nectar in flowers within 2-5 minutes and able to produce nearly 1000 flowers per plant. They may not host specialist pollinator larvae, but they can certainly contribute benefits to the ecosystem.

(Continued on page 7)

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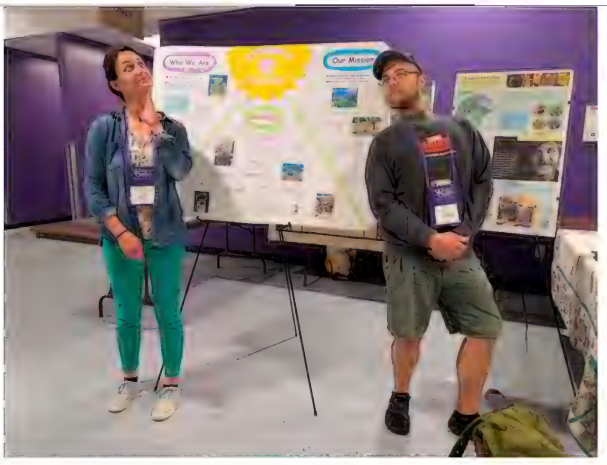
The final presentation that I would like to highlight was by Corlee Thomas-Hill, a tribal liaison for the Southeastern Grassland Institute. This organization is dedicated to restoring the lost grasslands of the southeast through collective action and education, and works to connect existing Native American tribes to the historical ranges of their ancestors. Southern grasslands are among the most diverse in the whole of the U.S. and the most imperiled, with only a fraction remaining of what once existed. Corlee asserted that "no grassland is too small" and that many of these imperiled species are vitally important for preserving indigenous knowledge and ways of life. Many of these plants were honored and named by tribes, associating them with meaning or uses. This naming connects people to ancestral land stewards who nurtured countless ecological communities for generations before colonization. The knowledge of these connections is priceless, as it is the story of humankind.



The grand finale of the conference was the infamous talent show featuring acts by the attendees and hosts in which Matthew (right) was an enthusiastic participant .

The grand finale of the conference was the infamous talent show, featuring acts by the attendees and hosts. The acts included bird mimicry, poetry, music, and other incredible performances that were genuine and, at times, tear-jerking. I left the conference with a deeper sense of place in the southeast and a greater desire to do my part in conserving and restoring the vital, functional ecosystems that all life depends on. As Dr. Seuss said, "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Tennessee Native Plant Society for sponsoring my attendance at the conference this year. Without the aid of organizations like TNPS, many passionate individuals would not have the opportunity to attend these inspirational educational experiences that fuel their drive to continue working toward societal and ecological change.

TECH TIPS: Navigating NEON

Your guide to making the most of the TNPS website and Neon Portal

We have received questions from TNPS members regarding the use of the Neon CRM Member Portal. The portal serves several purposes, including:

1. Creating a new membership account or renewing an existing one.
2. Modifying your account profile, such as updating your mailing address or changing communication preferences.
3. Changing your member account password.
4. Reviewing events with online registration or submitting your registration for those events.
5. Making a donation.

To access your membership account in Neon CRM, visit the TNPS website by entering "tnps.org" in your browser. Click the "Login" button located at the top right corner of the TNPS webpage. You will be taken to a login tab labeled "Log in to your account." Enter your username and password to access the Member Login Portal. If you don't have an account, you can click "Create an Account" at the bottom.

If you have any questions about the TNPS Member Login Portal, please email your inquiries and contact information to support@tnps.org, and a TNPS support representative will reach out to you.

2025 TNPS Fieldtrip Reports

JUNE 21, RITA VENABLE'S POLLINATOR GARDEN: LANDSCAPING WITH NATIVE PLANTS IN AN HOA

Fieldtrip report by Kim Sadler

Rita Venable (author, *Butterflies of Tennessee,* and PBS *Volunteer Garden Host*) and her husband Phil shared their morning with us at their residence in Franklin, TN. It is impressive how they have incorporated their philosophy about gardening with native plants and nectar/habitat species for native pollinators within an HOA's (Home Owners Association) regulations. In keeping with HOA guidelines, there is a section of fescue grass in the front yard, but unlike any other homes in the neighborhood, there are two larger mulched landscaped beds on both sides of the grassy area in the front and a veritable wildlife habitat in the backyard.

Rita Venable's front yard. A haven for wildlife.

Rita explained she likes her plants to be situated like children at their desks in a school, where each has their own place. If a plant doesn't thrive where it is planted, it will be moved. Many of her plants are labeled, making the visit a lesson in plant identification for us, plus educating the curious passersby in the neighborhood.

Rita greeting field trip attendees in her front yard.

Out of view from HOA police scrutiny, the Venable's have more liberty in how plants are situated in their backyard. The gardens have walking paths through sections and plants are more densely clustered together. Rita noted how dynamic gardening can be, as the recent loss of two hardwood trees in the back has her thinking about plants more suitably adapted for the new sunnier conditions. President Mitchell Kent and I thought it would be wonderful if other TNPS members with native plant gardens would volunteer to host this type of field trip. Thank you to Rita and Phil!

(Please note: This field trip filled up quickly, with all 30 slots taken within days of being posted, but only half of those who registered attended. If you can't attend a fieldtrip you registered for, please cancel at least 24 hours in advance to allow others to participate.)

Rita shared this list of some of the plants we enjoyed viewing in her yard. Perhaps you will be inspired to plant some of these species in your yard, too.

Common blue violet, *Viola sororia*

<u>Ground covers</u>:

Cherokee sedge (*Carex cherokeensis*)

Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)

rosette grass (*Dicanthelium* sp.)

palm sedge (*Carex muskingumensis*)

common blue violet (*Viola sororia*)

wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*)

<u>Edging</u>:

blue-eyed grass, stout (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*) 'Lucerne'

nodding wild onion (*Allium cernuum*)

loosestrife, lanceleaf (*Lysimachia lanceolata var. purpurea*)

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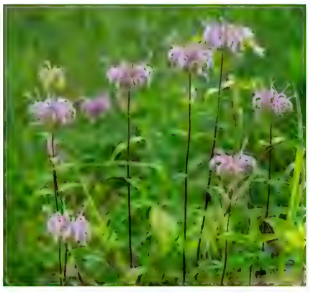
Grasses:

Muhley grass, *Muhlenbergia capillaris*

little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)
switchgrass (P*anicum virgatum*) 'Cheyenne Sky', 'Shenandoah', 'North Wind'
muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)

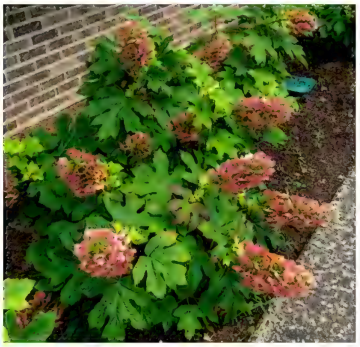
Forbs:



Wild bergamot, *Monarda fistulosa*

blue sage (*Salvia azurea*)
wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*)
cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*)
common milkweed *(Asclepias syriaca*)
orange milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)
smooth aster (*Symphyotrichum laeve*)
pale purple coneflower (*Echinacea pallida*)
purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida*) 'Glitters Like Gold' and 'Goldstrum'
rose verbena (*Verbena canadensis*) 'Homestead Purple'
downy skullcap (*Scutellaria incana*)
greater tickseed (*Coreopsis major*)
hoary vervain (*Verbena stricta*)

Shrubs:



Oakleaf Hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*

sweet shrub (*Calycanthus floridus var. floridus*) 'Athens'
shrubby St. Johnswort (*Hypericum prolificum*)
golden St. Johnswort (*Hypericum frondosum*) 'Sunburst'
autumn sage (*Salvia greggi*)
buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*) 'Sugar Shack'
'Purple Dome' New York (*Symphyotrichum novi-belgii*) and New England (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*) asters
Walter's viburnum (*Viburnum obovatum*) 'Best Densa'and 'Reiffler's Dwarf'
oakleaf hydrangeas (*Hydrangea quercifolia*): 'Sike's Dwarf', 'Munchkin', 'Ruby Slippers', 'Snow Queen'

Trees:

red maple (*Acer rubrum*) 'October Glory' and 'Red Pointe'
common hoptree (*Ptelea trifoliata*)

Flowering Dogwood, *Cornus florida*

spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)
sweetbay magnolia (*Magnolia virginiana*) 'Moon Glow'
Carolina laurel (*Prunus caroliniana*)
eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) 'Taylor'
southern magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) 'Little Gem'
pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)
smoke tree (*Cotinus coggygria*) 'Royal Purple'
American holly (*Ilex opaca*)
blackhaw viburnum (*Viburnum prunifolium*)
flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
deciduous holly (*Ilex decidua*) 'Sentry' (male and female)

Vines:

Passionvine, *Passiflora incarnata*

clematis (*Clematis virginiana*) (in a pot on back porch)
trumpet honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) 'Major Wheeler'
Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*)
passionvine (Passiflora incarnata)
woolly Dutchman's pipe (*Aristolochia tomentosa*)

Fieldtrip photos courtesy of Kim Sadler and plant images courtesy of Donna Bollenbach

JULY 19, SAND PRAIRIE CONSERVATION AREA, SCOTT CO, MISSOURI

Fieldtrip report by Bart Jones

The Sand Prairie Adventure Group

A really great group of eight adventurers gathered at the Sand Prairie Conservation Area near Benton, Missouri, on a hot, sunny day to experience this unique habitat. Only 2,000 acres of sand prairie remain in southeast Missouri, providing the last refuge for several state rare species.

The flora of the sand prairies is an eclectic mix of midwestern tallgrass prairie and southeastern coastal plain prairies, with a few barrens species thrown in for good measure.

Jointweed, *Polygonella americana*

As we left the parking lot, we immediately encountered the two characteristic plants of these prairies: Jointweed (*Polygonella americana*) and plains golden-aster (*Heterotheca camporum*). Jointweed has a fairly large, scattered range, including Tennessee, where it is never considered very common. These plants have the unique feature of the seed pods being as showy as the flowers, so they have a prolonged "bloom" period.

Plains golden aster, *Heterotheca camporum*

As we moved toward areas of open sand, we came upon another of our target species, slender rushfoil (*Croton michauxii*). These plants are very wiry with narrow leaves and tiny flowers, so much so that they almost disappear among the other plants. Also here in the more open, sandy areas were numerous flatsedges, including the rare sand prairie flatsedge (*Cyperus grayoides*).

Moving down just a few feet in elevation from the open sandy areas revealed a damper, more densely vegetated area that harbored more of our target species. One aspect of the plants in this harsh environment is the narrow, hairy leaves that many of them possess. Two species of tick-trefoil definitely fell into this category: Sessile-leaved tick-trefoil (*Desmodium sessilifolium*) and the rare disjunct pineland tick-trefoil (*Desmodium strictum*), which is over 300 miles north of the nearest populations in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Patterson's stylisma, *Stylisma pickeringii var. pattersonii*

Other noteworthy species seen were dotted beebalm (*Monarda punctata*), pigeonwings

Pineland tick-trefoil, *Desmodium strictum*

(Continued on page 11)

From left to right: Dotted beebalm, *Monarda punctata*; Prairie blazingstar, *Liatris pycnostachya;* Creeping St. Johnswort, *Hypericum adpressum*

(*Clitoria mariana*), Patterson's stylisma (*Stylisma pickeringii* ssp. *pattersonii*), broad-leaf snoutbean (*Rhynchosia latifolia*), and one gorgeous plant of prairie blazingstar (*Liatris pycnostachya*).

We made one last stop at another prairie which contained a small pond and wet draw below it to look for two more rare plants. At the pond edges were several plants of the dwarf burhead (*Helanthium tenellum*), then in the wooded section of the draw were a few plants of the globlly rare creeping St. Johnswort (*Hypericum adpressum*).

At this point the heat had pretty well done us in, so we quickly said our goodbyes and enjoyed an air-conditioned ride home.

Above: Pigeonwings , *Clitoria mariana*

Left: A Sand Prairie Scrub

Photos courtesy of Bart Jones

AUGUST 2, SUMMER ORCHIDS OF THE CUMBERLAND PLATEAU

Fieldtrip report by Chuck Wilson

Yellow fringed Orchid, *Platanthera ciliaris*

A small band (actually about 40) of TNPS individuals braved the extreme summer heat (in reality, heavily overcast and cool) to view and photograph several summer orchid species.

We met at the Fall Creek Falls volunteer firehouse to find abundant and spectacular yellow fringed orchids (*Platanthera ciliaris*) widely scattered under overhead power lines in mostly thick grassy vegetation. Along one edge of the corridor were a number of crested fringed orchids (*Platanthera cristata*) with small, tightly packed, and very cute flower racemes. In addition, just inside the bordering tree canopy, we saw one small woodland or club spur orchid (*Platanthera clavellata*) and one rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*). As we were leaving, some members also found a few green-lipped ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes lacera variety gracilis*).

Small woodland green orchid, also known as club spur orchid, *Platanthera clavellata*

Next, we carpooled to the Big Bottom unit of the Bridgestone/Firestone Wildlife Management Area north of Mooneyham. We entered on a rough gravel road, and after about two miles we stopped to explore another transmission line corridor. Although herbicide usage on woody plants had disfigured the appearance of the site, we immediately spotted "spring" ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes vernalis*) and more green-lipped ladies'-tresses (*Spiranthes lacera variety gracilis*) on our way to a quaking fen. We skirted the periphery of this unusual habitat to avoid sinking, and we saw prime examples of the same Platanthera species we saw earlier (*ciliaris, cristata, and clavellata*) but with the very notable addition of magnificent and lightly fragrant monkey-faced orchids (*Platanthera integrilabia*).

Monkey-faced orchids, *Platanthera integrilabia*

"Spring" ladies tresses, Spiranthes vernalis

Seven blooming orchid species on one day in pleasant weather with amiable company counts as a memorable experience. Thanks to Allen Sweetser, Ruth Ann Henry, and John White for helping to scout out the trip, and to Mitchell Kent for organizing and registration.

A group of the nearly 40 people who attended the fieldtrip.

Photos courtesy of Chuck Wilson

Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Passionflower

(Inspired by Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird by Wallace Stevens) *By Donna Bollenbach*

I

Among a thousand bees,
the only fragrance they desire
is the passionflower's.

II

I was of three hearts,
like a vine in which
there are three passion flowers.

III

The scent of the passion flower fills the meadow,
the bees and butterflies dance together.

IV

A bee and a butterfly
are one.
A bee and a butterfly, and a passionflower
are one.

V

O ladies of means,
why do you imagine roses?
Do you not see how the passionflower
grows wild in your yard and holds the key to your desire?

VI

The butterfly lays its eggs
in the shadow of the passionflower.
The caterpillar cuts swaths
through the leaves.
It is sacrificial love.

VII

I do not know which I prefer,
the complexity of the flower
or the intricacy of the vine.
The passion flower in bloom,
or the fruit left behind.

VIII

At the sight of a thousand passionflowers
growing in the meadow,
the pauper and the king
are equal.

IX

The worker bees lie drunk
in the purple fringes of the
passionflower,
while the queen paces the hive.

X

The passionflower spreads its vines,
tracing many paths through the meadow.

XI

The bees are buzzing,
the passionflower must be blooming.

XII

The hawk screeched,
fear cut through the field.
The sparrow found refuge
in the shadow of the passionflower.

XIII

It was cold all night.
There was frost in the morning.
The butterfly sat motionless
On the passionflower.

Proposed TNPS Membership Dues Increase

We conducted a study of membership dues of several other native plant organizations in the southeastern U.S. The chart below shows the results of our study. As you will see, TNPS has one of the lowest rates among all the organizations.

Comparison of Membership Rates

	Individual	Family / Household / Multi-member	Student, Full-time	Senior (55+)	Sustaining	Business / Corporate / Institutional	Lifetime - Family
Florida Native Plant Society	$35	$50	$15			$150	$1,000
Georgia Native Plant Society	$30	$50	$25	$25		$250	$1,000
Kentucky Native Plant Society	$15	$25	$10		$50	$100	$200
North Carolina Native Plant Society	$25	$35	$15			$50	$700
South Carolina Native Plant Society	$35	$40	$15			$75	$600
Tennessee Native Plant Society	$20	$20	$0			$50	$250
Virginia Native Plant Society	$30	$40	$15		$100		$500

In previous articles in the newsletter, the excellent growth in membership and the many activities that TNPS has sponsored this year were shared. The Neon One membership system serves several important functions, such as maintaining online membership data, implementing online registration for many of our field trips, providing a payment portal for books and conference registration, and others. Our Zoom capabilities have been expanded to handle larger numbers of participants for TNPS Online Seminars. For the first time, liability insurance has been obtained for TNPS as an organization. There has not been a membership fee increase in many years. It is time to consider a modest increase in the dues to cover the increasing costs.

The TNPS Board of Directors has agreed on the following new rates for membership dues, subject to approval by the TNPS membership.

Proposed TNPS Membership Dues for 2026

	Individual	Family / Household / Multi-member	Student, Full-time	Senior (55+)	Sustaining	Business / Corporate / Institutional	Lifetime - Family
Tennessee Native Plant Society*	~~$20~~	~~$20~~	~~$0~~			~~$50~~	~~$250~~
Proposed Dues for 2026	**$25**	**$35**	**$10**			**$100**	**$350**

* Reduced price memberships to be offered at educaton outreach events at $15.

A comparison of the proposed dues with other native plant organizations shows that TNPS dues will remain lower than most, even with the proposed new rates.

Per the TNPS By-Laws, this matter will be open for discussion during the Annual Conference Business Meeting, at which point a vote will be called. If approved, the new rates will take effect for all new memberships and renewals beginning January 1, 2026.

Fall Fieldtrip & Conference Dates

9/6 Van Buren County Powerline
(Register Online)
9/13 The Point Trail at Obed Wild and Scenic River, Morgan Co.
(Reserve by email)
9/26-28 TNPS Annual Meeting & Conference at Pickwick Landing SP, Hardin Co.

The Autumn Quilt

by Donna Bollenbach

The sun squints on the horizon
as she spreads her autumn quilt
over the table earth.

She weaves threads of golden grasses
with yellow sunflowers and goldenrods,
and plaits blue blazing stars
into the living fabric.

Her smile brightens as her handiwork
comes to life. Her autumn quilt
warms the earth and the hearts
of those who bear witness.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society Presents
2025 Native Plant Seminars

Each year the Tennessee Native Plant Society hosts monthly Native Plant Seminars from January through November. These events are held via Zoom on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Central (7:30 p.m. Eastern) and last about one hour. All members, and potential members, are welcome to join the seminars at no cost. The link to join each seminar will be posted on the *Seminars* and *Calendar* pages of our website: www.tnps.org. Seminar speakers are drawn from our knowledgeable membership, from professionals across the state, and from the professors and students studying our Tennessee native plants. A range of topics will be covered that may include plants that are currently blooming, native plants in our yards, current research on native plants, protections for native plants, and so much more. Join us for an hour a month to learn more about Tennessee native plants.

2025 TNPS Native Plant Seminar Upcoming Semionars & Video links

Videos of past Seminars are available our website: www.tnps.org

9/16 Kris Light, *The Birds and Bees of Wildflowers*

10/21 Eli Harris, *Floristic Diversity of Window Cliffs State Natural Area*

11/18 Steve Slack, *Growing Native Plants by Sees Sourced Locally*

When Are Dues Due?

Membership dues are due one year from the date of last payment. You will receive a reminder email 5 days before expiration asking you to renew. There is currently a grace period of 65 days in which you retain your membership status.

If you go into your membership portal (www.TNPS.org, and click the LOGIN button or https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/login) you will see when your membership is due to expire. You may also renew your membership, if it is near expiration, and sign up for auto renewal if you wish. Payment is either by credit card or delayed payment if you mail a check. If there have been changes to your email or physical address, please update your membership.

If you have any questions or problems, contact support@tnps.org.

TNPS Newsletter
P.O. Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

TENNESSEE NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Volume 49 Number 4 December 2025

TNPS 2025 Annual Conference Review

Contributed by Mary Priestley

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About 50 TNPS members gathered at the inn at Pickwick State Park on the weekend of September 26-28 for our annual meeting. Thanks to the planning of board member Bart Jones and others, the people- and plant-packed weekend went off without a hitch.

On Friday evening, we were treated to a talk on the 40th Anniversary of our state's Rare Plant Protection Act, given by TN State Botanist and TNPS member Todd Crabtree. In particular, Todd highlighted efforts to preserve the Price's potato bean, a plant that can be found in the Pickwick area.

On Saturday, some of us stayed at the convention center to enjoy a morning presentation by John Manion on understanding botanical names, followed by an afternoon botanical walk in the vicinity. Others headed out to the field for a full day of botanizing, first on the property of local resident John Ross, and in the afternoon at Walker Branch State Natural Area.

Sunday morning walk

That night, our keynote speaker, Sewanee's Dr. Jon Evans, shared the story of his

(continued on page 3)

TNPS Newsletter

This newsletter is a publication of the Tennessee Native Plant Society and is published four times a year, generally March, June, September, and December.

The Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS) was founded in 1978. Its purposes are to assist in the exchange of information and encourage fellowship among Tennessee's botanists, both amateur and professional; to promote public education about Tennessee flora and wild plants in general; to provide, through publication of a newsletter or journal, a formal means of documenting information on Tennessee flora and of informing the public about wild plants; and to promote the protection and enhancement of Tennessee's wild plant communities.

Membership Dues:
Individual/Family: $20
Student: Complimentary
Institution: $50
Life:$250
Join online or renew via the member portal, or mail a check to:
Tennessee Native Plant Society
PO Box 159274
Nashville, TN 37215

Officers
Mitchell Kent, President
Tim Kaltenbach, Vice-President
Sue Bible, Secretary
Juanita Wade, Assistant Secretary
Kim Sadler, Treasurer
Lesly & Jesse Gunn, Outreach Educators

Directors
Anne Balentine
Bart Jones
Larry Pounds
Mary Priestley
Ken Rea
Allan Trently

Newsletter Editor
Deborah Adams

President's Perspective

Dear Members,

I'm delighted to share that more than 50 new members have joined the Tennessee Native Plant Society this quarter, bringing our total number of members to 830! Please join me in offering a warm welcome to our newest members from across Tennessee and beyond.

Whether you've come to deepen your knowledge of native plants, connect with fellow enthusiasts, or engage in conservation efforts, we encourage you to take full advantage of all that TNPS has to offer. If you have any questions or need support, don't hesitate to reach out to us at info@tnps.org.

It was a pleasure to see many of you at our 2025 Annual Conference in September. The weekend offered wonderful opportunities to learn, connect, and explore the rich native plant communities of West Tennessee. A heartfelt thank-you to Bart Jones for his outstanding work organizing such a successful event.

One of the final items on the conference agenda was the annual business meeting with members. During the meeting, we reviewed progress on this year's objectives and discussed the proposed increase in membership dues, which had previously been approved by the board. An amendment was introduced from the floor to raise the proposed lifetime membership dues from $350 to $500. The amendment was put to a vote and passed. The amended proposal was then approved by a majority vote of the members. Planning for implementation is currently underway, with the changes set to take effect on January 1, 2026. Additional guidance regarding membership renewal will be provided in December.

Looking ahead, we're launching a new initiative to expand and strengthen our volunteer network. Volunteers are truly the heart of TNPS—your time, energy, and expertise make everything we do possible. While volunteering requires commitment, it's also a rewarding way to get to know fellow members, contribute your skills, and gain a deeper understanding of TNPS's mission and impact.

To support this effort, I'm working with Karen Hill to enhance our website and Neon CRM system to better share information about volunteer opportunities and how to get involved. We'll be providing updates and advertising open roles soon, so stay tuned.

Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for TNPS. I look forward to connecting with many of you in the months ahead.

With appreciation,
Mitchell
President, Tennessee Native Plant Society

(continued from page 1)

discovery of a new species, *Phacelia sewaneensis*, in the University's Shakerag Hollow. He presented our president Mitchell Kent with a print of a painting of the plant by TNPS member Mary Priestley and invited us to campus in April to see the plant for ourselves. The night was capped off with a short, informative annual membership meeting.

Before hitting the road Sunday, we die-hard botanizers had one last botanical foray along the banks of Pickwick Lake, right in front of the inn. It was a fun and beautiful weekend — great to see old friends, meet new ones, and get acquainted with the fall flora of that part of Tennessee!

Group with Ranger Kaylee

Van Buren County Powerline Outing (2025)

Fieldtrip report by Larry Pounds

We started out in rain and it never stopped. The thirteen of us walked into an area of yellow composites. Yellow came from many species. particularly tickseed sunflower (*Bidens polylepis*), tall coreopsis (*Coreopsis tripteris*), stiff-haired sunflower (*Helianthus hirsutus*) and Appalachian sunflower (*Helianthus atrorubens).* Less showy were three species of goldenrod, *Solidago odorata, S. nemoralis and S. rugosa*. What we saw was somewhat limited by extensive areas of controlled burn in the right-of-way. The prairie plants should benefit from the burn even next year.

This powerline is known for its *Platanthera* orchids but we only saw orchid fruit due to the time of year. We found a dead glass lizard which at first glance appeared to be a snake. This lizard has no legs but does have visible ear openings which snakes do not. They are called glass lizards because they, like other lizards, can break. They can detach their tails to survive predator attacks on their tails. It was wonderful to enjoy the enthusiastic company of outdoor lovers even when dripping with rain.

Visit to the UT Herbarium

Contributed by Mitchell Kent

Kentucky Lady Slipper (Cypripedium kentuckiense) from Scott Cty TN

The University of Tennessee Herbarium in Knoxville hosted its "Specimens and Scones" event in mid-November, offering participants an up-close look at the Herbarium's work and a guided tour of this remarkable facility. With more than 650,000 plant specimens, it is the largest herbarium collection in Tennessee.

The event was led by Herbarium Director Dr. Budke and Collections Manager Garrett Billings, who provided an engaging tour and shared valuable insights into the collections, preservation techniques, and the important role herbarium specimens play in current plant research.

More than 25 people attended, including several TNPS members. We extend our appreciation to the UT Herbarium staff for hosting such an informative and enjoyable event!

TECH TIPS: Explore Volunteer Opportunities With TNPS

This Tech Tip highlights a new way to learn about and get involved in volunteer opportunities with the Tennessee Native Plant Society (TNPS). We've added a **Volunteer page** under the Resources tab on our website that provides an overview of volunteering within TNPS, along with descriptions of twelve distinct volunteer roles.

You can visit the new page here: https://tnps.org/volunteer/

To make it even easier to get involved, a blue **"Volunteer Now"** button near the top of the Volunteer page links directly to the **TNPS Volunteer Interest Survey**. This short form allows you to indicate which roles interest you most. Simply check the boxes beside the volunteer positions you'd like to support, complete the form, and submit it. Your information will be shared with the appropriate volunteer contact, who will follow up with an email when opportunities become available that match your selections.

We encourage all members to explore these new resources and consider lending your time and talents to help keep TNPS strong. Questions? Email us at **info@tnps.org**

Viburnum nudum—a Discovery on Vacation

Plant profile by Terri Joyce

On September 6, 2025, while kayaking on Indian Boundary Lake off the Cherohala Scenic Skyway near Tellico Plains, TN, I caught sight of what looked like large, pale pink blooms several yards away on a tall shrub at the water's edge.

As I maneuvered closer, I saw lovely clusters of berries in various shades of pink that were the source of the distant illusion of blooms. Not having a camera with me at that point, I was able to snip a cluster of berries for closer inspection. I took note of the shore location and later went for a short bushwhack off the popular trail that encircles the lake. My feet sunk into very soggy ground as I leaned out over the water to get this picture where 3-4 large shrubs lined the lakeshore.

This cluster was on the water side of a large shrub thus receiving more light to create the lovely variety of pink shades. The lone blue berry is beginning to ripen.

On the inland side, and under the shade of the 7 to 8-foot tall bushes, I discovered these earlier stage berries which apparently begin with what later research described as "yellowish- green to bluish white".

Since we have neither internet nor cell phone connections at the Indian Boundary campground, I feared my research efforts would be very limited. However, I did have with me a recent generous thank-you gift from TNPS for mentoring a school garden: *Woody Plants of Kentucky and Tennessee* by Ronald L. Jones and B. Eugene Wofford, 2013. As the subtitle "*The Complete Winter Guide to Their Identification and Use*" implies, I did not have bloom or berry images to compare. However, an inkling of

naturalist instinct did lead me to settle on the listing for the genus Viburnum, which Jones & Wofford indicates is the Latin name for "the wayfaring tree" (Jones and Wofford, 2013, pg. 111). As I perused the 11 species listed in their key, the following quote from Jones and Woodford seemed to best fit the location. Per their format explanation, the leading ! denotes rare species listed at state and/or federal levels (Jones and Wofford, 2013, pg.3) citing (Crabtree 2012, KSPNC 2010).

"V. nudum L. Possum h. Low mesic woods, stream banks, swamps. Chiefly on the AP (Appalachian Plateau) of TN, also westward to N CP (Coastal Plain) and adjacent county in KY. Endangered in KY. OBL (obligate wetland plant, over 99% chance of occurring in wetlands). FACW+ (facultative plants, 34 to 66% chance of

occurring in wetlands ." Additional notation: " (*Nudum = bare, naked)".* (Jones and Wofford, 2013, pg. 112).

As of 2021, V. nudum was not included on the Tennessee rare plant list (Crabtree, 2021), suggesting some recovery of the species. However, the 2022 rare plant list for neighboring Kentucky lists this species as endangered with a S1 (Critically Imperiled) ranking within the state. (Rodgers, Littlefield, and McDonald, 2022, pg. 28).

Common names for this Viburnum are Possum Haw and Smooth Witherrod or withe-rod, referring to the flexible, rod-like shoots. Interestingly the ripening fruits are known as "wild raisins". Last spring when I took grandchildren to Pioneer Day at Fort Loudon State Park some "Wild Raisin Jam" was among the colonial food offerings and I found it to be very delicious. A deep dive down an internet rabbit hole failed to produce a recipe for such jam, but did inform me that there is a Northern and a Southern variety of V. nudum. Most references to Wild Raisin Jam were on northern websites, so possibly there is a taste difference between the two varieties or maybe the colder northern temperatures help to sweeten the ripening fruit.

The Northern variety, Viburnum nudum var. cassinoides, is described by Benjamin Lord as having "clusters of small, snow-white, four-petaled flowers in June". He goes on to describe "juicy-looking shiny, red berries" in summer not being edible till September when they turn "black and wrinkled". At the same time the brownish-purple leaves fall and Lord describes the odor of leaves and berries to be "reminiscent of sweaty socks that grace autumn woodlands!" (Lord, 2019 pg. 1) Despite this, he assures us that the berries are tasty raw but further enhanced by cooking.

The Southern variety is Viburnum nudum var. nudum. The following information from Tennessee Smart Yards (McKinley, 2019) may be useful for readers interested in adding this interesting shrub to their native plant palette and bird buffet.

Common Name: Witherod, Possum Haw, Southern Witherod

Sun to light shade; wet to moderately dry; prefers wet, mucky soils but very adaptable to gravelly and sandy loams, fine sands, silt loams, silts peats and clay; moderately acid pH.

6-12 feet height by 4-15 feet spread; blooms in June; creamy white flowers; football-shaped, black berries, 1/4-3/8 inch long, in broad, flattened clusters in fall.

Growth Rate: Medium

Maintenance: Infrequent disease and insect problems. Easy to grow. All viburnums benefit from a thinning or hard pruning in late winter to remove older stems.

Propagation: Easy from softwood cuttings

Native Region: Cumberland Plateau, eastern Highland Rim, and West Tennessee uplands

Attractive, well-behaved, deciduous shrub with upright, spreading branches. Rather foul smelling flowers but outstanding display of berries. Fruits have a distinctive color change, starting out with whitish pink and then changing in sequence to red, blue, and black. Fall leaf color is often outstanding, dark red to scarlet and purple. This southern V. nudum var. nudum is one of two varieties; the other is the northern V. nudum var cassioides. This variety has glossier leaves. Birds love the berries. High wildlife value.

On Sept 23, 17 days after my initial observation, I was able to check on these same specimens from my kayak and got this cell pic showing nearly half of the sun exposed berries turning blue, but none yet to the black wrinkled stage described by Benjamin Lord.

Nearly a month later when I revisited the location on October 20 the clusters sported still plump berries with all shining a deep blue hue. After two nights of chilly temps in the low 40's and even dipping to 35 degrees on the third night, I hoped to see some ripening to harvestable black and wrinkled. However this final picture on October 23 indicates minimal wrinkling and no black raisin-like appearance yet. I guess they will need a few more thermometer dips before harvest.

I know I will have to try to get back up to visit these specimens next June to search for the blooms via kayak. Additionally, I may need to explore that jam recipe further via contacts at Fort Loudon.

Citations:

Crabtree, T. (2021). Rare Plant List [Review of *Rare Plant List*]. *Tennessee Natural Heritage*, *2021*. https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/environment/natural-areas/documents/na_tn-rare-plant-list.pdf

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Lord, B. (2019, October 24). *Fall Fruits: Wild Raisin, Nannyberry, and Hobblebush*. Northernwoodlands.org; The Center for Northern Woodlands Education. https://northernwoodlands.org/knots_and_bolts/fall-fruits-wild-raisin-nannyberry-hobblebush

McKinley. (2019, October 22). *Tennessee Smart Yards | Tennessee Smart Yards*. Utk.edu. https://tnyards.utk.edu/

Rodgers, D, T. Littlefield, and K. McDonald. 2022. Kentucky Rare Plant List, 2022 edition. Energy and Environment Cabinet, Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves, Frankfurt, Kentucky

Field Trips to John Ross' Farm, Walker Branch State Natural Area, and Pickwick Landing Shore

Fieldtrip report by Jan and Ken Rea

Being from Northeast Tennessee, we were anticipating the Annual Conference field trips as there would be new native plant species for us. The trip didn't disappoint, as nine new species were identified. Many of these species were endemic to West and Middle Tennessee. These included:

Acmella repens

- Climbing Hempvine (Mikania scandens). Tennessee's only aster vine species.
- Delta Arrowhead (Sagittaria platyphylla)
- Dotted Smartweed (Persicaria punctata)
- Few Flowered Tick-Trefoil (Hylodesmum pauciflorum)
- Oppositeleaf Spotflower (Acmella repens)
- Snow Squarestem (Melanthera nivea)
- Southern Tubercled Orchid (Platantherea flava v. flava)
- Virginia Dayflower (Commelina virginica)
- Wingleaf Primrose-Willow (Ludwigia decurrens)

Mikania scandens

One species that captured our imagination was Snow Squarestem (Melantherea nivea). The photo shows the beauty and symmetry of the disk flowers, reminding you of a snowflake. The plant is listed as rare in Tennessee and is found in a few counties in West Tennessee and the Western Highland Rim. Snow Squarestem is found in low woods and thickets, along shorelines and embayments.

Melanthera nivea

Walker Branch State Natural Area, Hardin County, Tennessee

Fieldtrip report by Allan Trently

September 27, 2025 After a morning trip to the Ross Forest in Savannah, TNPS members joined trip leaders Allan Trently and Bart Jones at the Walker Branch State Natural Area. This 520-acre natural area was designated in 1997, in part, for its high diversity of dragonflies. Not only are dragonflies diverse, but so are plants. Nearly 500 species of plants have been documented for the site. The richness of the site

Platanthera flava var. flava

can be attributed to its location within the Transition Hills of Tennessee. On its western end, Walker Branch has swamps, marshes, and

Melanthera nivea

bottomland forests. The eastern end of the natural area transitions into mesic to dry-mesic uplands. This transition from wet to dry creates a landscape of varied plant communities and thus plant species.

TNPS members were treated to observations of snow squarestem (*Melanthera nivea*) a species only found along the Tennessee River Valley and a disjunct population at Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park. We also saw many plants associated with the water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatica*) swamp including flowering palegreen orchids (*Platanthera flava* var. *flava*). Some non-plant highlights included a young cottonmouth and some carnival candy slime mold (*Arcyria denudata*). The slime mold looks like tiny stalks of cotton candy.

The Tennessee Division of Natural Areas wishes to thank the TNPS for visiting this natural area and hope for many return visits.

Tennessee Biodiversity Summit

Contributed by Kim Cleary Sadler

The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency hosted the Inaugural TN Biodiversity Summit on October 22 at Middle Tennessee State University. The purpose of the gathering was to showcase past and current achievements of the Tennessee State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). The Tennessee SWAP aims to conserve, preserve, manage, and protect Tennessee's fish and wildlife, as well as their habitats. The invitation to wildlife enthusiasts, including students, researchers, and wildlife professionals, was well-received, with more than 600 participants attending.

It was fitting that a botanist opened the Summit, because in terrestrial habitats, the plant community determines the animal community. Roger McCoy, State Naturalist and Director of the TN Division of Environment and Conservation, invited each of us to reflect on how we can engage others who are not familiar with Tennessee's magnificent biodiversity. He stressed that we each have a role, "a niche," in supporting biodiversity. Some suggestions Roger had for us were to be ambassadors for nature, let our passion shine, but also meet people where they are. He encouraged us to be advocates, and even if the first response is *no*, to continue inviting newcomers to join us on hikes or related natural history experiences. He shared how Dr. Elsie Quarterman, a botanist and conservationist, invited then-governor Winfield Dunn to hike with her to Savage Gulf, and how that invitation was key to the state's acquisition of the land. The most engaging part of Roger's presentation was his conclusion, when he went "off script" and asked everyone to stand and meet someone new at the Summit.

Following Roger, seven other wildlife professionals shared impressive and sometimes alarming information about the state of biodiversity in Tennessee's wildlife. Director of Conservation Fisheries, Bo Baxter, spoke about the propagation and reintroduction of some of Tennessee's imperiled fishes; since 1986, more than five imperiled species have been reintroduced to Tennessee rivers.

Dr. David Aborn, from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, shared that 23% of Tennesseans are birders, and by taking care of birds, you also take care of most other organisms concurrently. A total of 405 bird species have been documented in Tennessee, and technology now enables the tracking of species across continents, providing valuable data that was previously unknown.

Dr. Matthew Niemiller, professor at the University of Alabama (UTK and MTSU alumnus), spoke about amphibians, which have a biphasic life cycle and are often referred to as the "canaries in the coal mine," with 87 species occurring in Tennessee. The Hellbender is the largest, weighing in at 5.5 pounds, measuring 2 feet in length, and found in clean, fast-flowing streams. It is a state-endangered species due to impoundment and pollution.

Dr. Emma Wilcox, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, spoke about Tri-colored bats. Although

the most common bat in Tennessee, its population has declined by 95%, and it is currently being listed as an endangered species in Tennessee due to white-nose syndrome. This is a fungal infection that was introduced to the state in 2006, infecting the skin and causing early awakening in bats.

Parker Hildreth, TWRA, said that with 97 species, Tennessee is second only to Alabama in the number of crayfish species. Five of the species occur exclusively in caves, and all are listed as having a conservation status. One of the largest crayfish species in North America is found in Tennessee; the Bottlebrush crayfish reaches a length of 9 inches.

Brittany Bajo-Walker, TWRA, shared that of the 144 mussel species, one-third of them in Tennessee are federally threatened. Mussels are ecosystem engineers that embed in the substrate and clean the water. The Duck River, the only river entirely within Tennessee, is home to more than 150 mussel species, the second-highest number in the nation after Alabama.

An exciting announcement was made by Josh Campbell, Chief of the Biodiversity Division at TWRA, who announced a multi-partner collaboration to reintroduce the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) to Tennessee. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation had undertaken restoration work to protect the federally threatened white fringeless orchid (*Plantathera integrilabia*), and establish shortleaf pine (*Pinus echinata*) in 1,200 acres of the Savage Gulf State Natural Area. The expanse of protected acreage prompted a conversation about the reintroduction of the RCW, last sighted in the Cherokee Forest in 1994. Multiple state and federal agencies agreed that this is a worthwhile endeavor; the projected year for the reintroduction is 2028.

Notice to Members

Nominations Now Open for TNPS Board of Director Positions

The purpose of this notice is to highlight the procedures for filling three TNPS Board of Director positions whose terms are ending. As stated in the TNPS Bylaws, board members serve two-year terms. The terms of three current directors, Anne Ballentine, Bart Jones, and Allan Trently, will conclude on December 31, 2025. All have indicated their willingness to continue serving, pending re-election.

We are now accepting nominations for individuals who would like to be considered for these board positions. If you wish to nominate someone, please send their name and contact information to **info@tnps.org**. In accordance with the Bylaws, each nomination must also include an email or written statement from the nominee confirming that they are willing to serve if elected.

Our goal is to hold the election by **December 15, 2025**, so we ask that nominations be submitted as soon as possible to allow time to prepare the ballot and conduct the election. Thank you for your participation and continued support of TNPS.

Hart's-Tongue Fern Forays

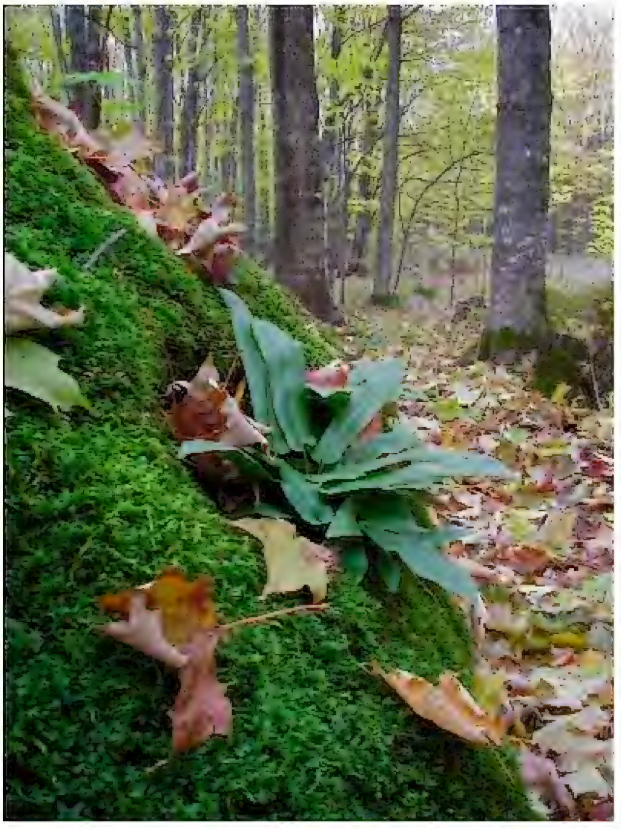
Contributed by Mary Priestley

A recent email requesting a photo of hart's-tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*) brought back memories for me! The fern, which some have characterized as the rarest plant in Tennessee, is in a sinkhole on the side of the Cumberland Plateau, overlooking South Pittsburg. There are populations in one or two other sinkholes in northeast Alabama, one inside a cave in New Mexico, and slightly larger populations in New York and Michigan. Suffice it to say that the southern populations are at risk of extirpation.

I last visited the Tennessee site more than 10 years ago, tagging along with TDEC staffers David Lincicome and longtime TNPS member Andrea Shea Bishop; Geoff Call with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; researchers from Syracuse University; and Henry Lodge, great (or great, great?) grandson of Joseph Lodge. The elder Lodge, founder of Lodge Cast Iron, was at the turn of the 20th century the informal caretaker of this vulnerable plant population.

The sinkhole is basically a narrow slit in the limestone, created and fed by a small stream. A Major Cheatham, exploring the area for coal deposits in the late 19th century, climbed inside and discovered the ferns.

Lodge, an amateur naturalist, first visited the population in 1890. His correspondence with scientists about the plant now resides at the Tennessee State Library and Archives. About 100 years ago, someone sprinkled spores from a New York population into the sinkhole, boosting the number of plants but leading TDEC botanist David Lincicome to question whether the population can still be considered natural.



American Hart's tongue fern, Photo by Linda Swartz.

I have gone into the sinkhole twice, following my mentor Dr. George Ramseur down his homemade rope ladder, fashioned from slender basswood rungs that he had strung between two 100-foot lengths of one-inch surplus World War II rope. Pretty exciting -- but what was I thinking?! Twice!

On that most recent foray, using modern climbing equipment and garb (Where's the adventure in that?), researchers found only two or three (sporophyte) plants, each about the size of a quarter. However, although the population is at risk because of the small number of diminutive plants, the site is in good hands, cared for by the young couple who now own the property.

Plant Profile: Delta Arrowhead (Sagittaria platyphylla)

Contributed by Mitchell Kent

The delta arrowhead is a perennial aquatic plant that grows 1 to 3 feet tall in shallow fresh water of marshes, swamps and other freshwater wetlands. Other common names include Plantainleaf Arrowhead and Duck-Potato. Its native range extends through the Southeastern states including Tennessee where it is thinly scattered.

The leaves are straight and upright, oval or swordlike in shape and lack lobes. Leaves reach up to 7 inches in length and over 3 inches wide.

Its flowers are grouped in clusters and are white with three petals, appearing from June to September. The plant features stolons and fleshy corms, with submerged portions providing habitat for aquatic invertebrates. Fruits are small, single-seeded. Propagation is via its seeds and rhizomes.

Beyond visual appeal, delta arrowhead plants have ecological value. They provide food for wildlife—its tubers are eaten by ducks, geese, muskrats, and beavers, while seeds are sometimes consumed by ducks.

The plant contributes to water quality and offers refuge for aquatic organisms, both directly as habitat and indirectly through detritus after decomposition. It also serves as a bioindicator due to its sensitivity to environmental changes.

TNPS's Scholarship Programs Reach Students from Grade School to Graduate School

Contributed by Tim Kaltenbach

Three years ago, Margaret Fletcher contacted TNPS hoping to honor her late husband's love of nature through a charitable donation. Our then president, Karen Hill, helped her fund the **Grants 4 Native Plants** program in memory of Chaplain Col. Russ Ragon. It pays for native plant gardens at elementary, middle and high schools across the state. A $500 grant covers supplies and TNPS furnishes a member/volunteer to oversee the plantings. Grants 4 Native Plants took off immediately and grew from six to ten schools in a single year! See the stories and photos here: http://tnps.org/wpcontent/uploads/2025/06/V49_No_2Jun_2025_2.pdf

Would you like to be part of this exceptional project?
Here are ways to donate:

1. Donate online through your TNPS secure account. Go to tnps.org and select Login in the upper right corner. On your profile page, click on the Donate box. To specifically allocate your gift, click on the Scholarship Fund option.

2. Or mail a check to TNPS. Send a check payable to Tennessee Native Plant Society and note that the money is for the TNPS Scholarship Fund. The address is:
   Tennessee Native Plant Society
   P.O. Box 159274
   Nashville, TN 37215

3. If you have a Donor Advised Fund (DAF), authorize your administrator to make a transfer to TNPS (Tax ID number 62-1247084). Specify that your gift is for the TNPS Scholarship Fund.

If you wish, TNPS will include your name on a Scholarship Fund donors' list on the website and in our quarterly newsletter. You can make your gift in your own name or in honor or memory of a friend or loved one.

Now a new TNPS opportunity supports university and graduate students who plan to build careers that preserve our rare and native plants!

By investing in the people who will be working and researching in this field, TNPS members play a dynamic role in the future.

TNPS will award $1,000 per year to each of five Tennessee public universities that will select one or more student recipients for botanical research, field studies, botanical outreach and education or

herbarium activities that enhance the student's educational experiences and likelihood of a career in botany.

The schools include Tennessee Technological University, East Tennessee State University, UT Chattanooga, the University of Memphis and UT Knoxville. Each school offers courses that align with the TNPS mission.

We will maintain both Grants 4 Native Plants and the university program together in a single account known as the **TNPS Scholarship Fund**. TNPS would like to gather funding through donations.

- Our successful "Grants 4 Native Plants" educates children in 10 elementary, middle and high schools across the state.
- A brand-new award program at 5 universities will support college and graduate level students in botany and plant science.
- See how your TNPS membership benefits people and the environment far into the future.

We are pleased to welcome **Deborah Adams** as the new **TNPS Newsletter Editor**. Deborah joined us in September and immediately got to work gathering articles and producing this issue. She brings valuable experience with editing tools and desktop publishing software, skills that will serve the society well.

Our thanks to **Donna Bollenbach**, our outgoing editor, for her excellent work and for assisting Deborah during the transition.

Members are encouraged to reach out to Deborah to introduce themselves and share ideas or content for future newsletters. She can be contacted at **dksadams@yahoo.com**.

When Are Dues Due?

Membership dues are due one year from the date of last payment. You will receive a reminder email 5 days before expiration asking you to renew. There is currently a grace period of 65 days in which you retain your membership status. If you go into your membership portal (www.TNPS.org, and click the LOGIN button or https://tnps.app.neoncrm.com/login) you will see when your membership is due to expire. You may also renew your membership, if it is near expiration, and sign up for auto renewal if you wish. Payment is either by credit card or delayed payment if you mail a check. If there have been changes to your email or physical address, please update your membership.

If you have any questions or problems, contact support@tnps.org.

TNPS Newsletter
P.O. Box 159274
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